LIFE STORIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

# MARIA THERESA

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# MARIA THERESA

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*Translated from the German by*
*GEORGE P. UPTON*

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# MARIA THERESA

*Translated from the German of*
*W. D. Von Horn*

BY

GEORGE P. UPTON

*Translator of "Memories," author of "Upton Handbooks on Music," editor "Autobiography of Theodore Thomas," etc., etc.*

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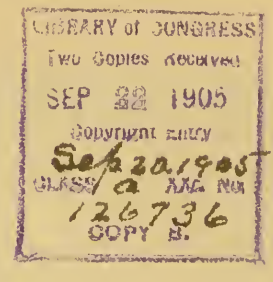


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# Translator's Preface

AMONG the famous queens of the world — Catharine II of Russia, Elizabeth, Anne Boleyn, and Victoria of England, Mary Queen of Scots, Isabella of Spain, Louise of Prussia, Marie Antoinette, Marie and Catharine di Medici of France, and others, Maria Theresa of Austria holds a conspicuous place. In statesmanship and patriotism she ranks with Elizabeth and Catharine. As Catharine greatly improved the administration of her Empire, introduced new laws and extended its frontiers, and as Elizabeth's reign was characterized by great commercial enterprises and extraordinary intellectual activity, so the reign of Maria Theresa, though she was engaged for years in two great wars, — that of the War of the Austrian Succession and the Seven Years' War with Frederick for the recovery of Silesia, which he had taken from her, — proved to be of the highest benefit to Austria in the strengthening of law and the introduction of needed reforms and wise measures for the welfare of the Empire. For years she was engaged in war for the

preservation of Silesia with the most potent sovereign in Europe — Frederick the Great. Doubtless he had some antique claim upon Silesia, but when Maria Theresa succeeded to the throne under the terms of the Pragmatic Sanction, all the European powers, Prussia among them, whose rights might be affected, renounced their claims. She relied upon their good faith, but on the slightest of pretexts Frederick broke it and determined to rob her of Silesia, even at the cost of plunging all Europe into a long and devastating war. He set aside a new treaty to enforce an old claim. He plainly condemned himself by his own words in his Memoirs: "Ambition, interest, the desire of making people talk about me carried the day and I decided for war." When peace was finally made, Maria Theresa retained her old inheritance, though she lost Silesia; but Frederick was more than willing to make peace, for all Germany had been a terrible sufferer by the war and Prussia was in dire straits. The story of the life of the great queen is briefly told in these pages. It is the story of the life of a proud, ambitious queen; a wise, judicious ruler, who had the best interests of her subjects at heart, and for whom they were always ready to die; a woman of spotless personal character

and true to all her domestic duties at a time when immorality and corruption were rife in high places. The story covers some of the same episodes of history which occur in the narrative of Frederick, in this series, but is none the less interesting, as the reader will find both sides presented.

G. P. U.

CHICAGO, 1905

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# Maria Theresa

## *Chapter I*

### *The Young Queen*

IT would almost seem that the Emperor Charles VI, the father of Maria Theresa, had a presentiment of what was to come, when, directly after his marriage, he obtained from the various states united under his dominion an order of succession called "The Pragmatic Sanction," [1] which decreed that in case his house should become extinct in the male line, succession to the throne should pass to his female descendants. To make this law binding and legal was such an important

[1] The term "Pragmatic Sanction" was first used in the case of decrees issued by Byzantine emperors with reference to the affairs of their provinces. It was next applied to the limitations of the spiritual authority of the Pope in European countries. In the sense in which it is used above it is applied to the succession of sovereignty. The Pragmatic Sanction of Charles VI is the most famous of all. It had three provisions, (1) that the lands belonging to the house of Austria should remain indivisible; (2) that in the absence of male heirs they should devolve upon Charles' daughters, the oldest of whom was Maria Theresa; and (3) that in case of the extinction of the line, the inheritance should pass to the daughters of Joseph I and their descendants. Charles issued this Sanction in 1713.

matter to him that it may be said to have been the chief aim of his life.

In the year 1716, to the great joy of the Emperor, a son was born to him. Vienna and the whole country shared in the rejoicings of the royal parents; but unfortunately their happiness was of short duration, for, before the Autumn of that year had strewn the earth with withered leaves, the heir to the throne had drooped and died. The Emperor's grief was intense, and was made harder to bear by reason of the many other cares and troubles which beset him on all sides at that time.

The second child was a daughter, Maria Theresa, who was born May 13, 1717,[1] and upon whose head, according to the right of primogeniture established by the Pragmatic Sanction, the crowns of the united Austrian states were one day to rest. Who could have imagined that this child, while

[1] Maria Theresa, Archduchess of Austria, Queen of Hungary and Bohemia, and Empress of Germany, was the daughter of Charles VI of Austria and Elizabeth Christina of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel. After the death of Archduke Leopold, her only brother, she became sole heiress of the Austrian dominions in 1724, married Francis Stephen of Lorraine in 1736, came to the throne in 1740, her husband being declared co-regent. She died in 1780. Of her sixteen children, ten reached maturity. Her sons were Joseph II, who succeeded his father as Holy Roman Emperor in 1765; Emperor Leopold II; Ferdinand, Duke of Modena, and Maximilian, Elector of Cologne. Her most famous daughter was Marie Antoinette, wife of Louis XVI of France, one of the many victims of the French Revolution.

inheriting all the beauty of her mother, would be endowed at the same time with a masculinity of intellect, together with a strength and wisdom, a firmness yet kindliness of disposition, which but few men have manifested?

St. Ambrose's "Hymn of Praise" was at once sung in the most solemn manner in St. Stephen's Cathedral, in the presence of all the highest dignitaries of the Empire, and the baptism of the heiress to the throne took place on the evening of the day of her birth with great pomp and splendor. After the loss of their first-born, the imperial couple were overjoyed at the advent of this child, and, amid all the cares and responsibilities forced upon him by his numerous wars, the devoted father never lost sight of his fixed purpose or relaxed his efforts to obtain universal recognition of his law of succession among the European powers, as well as the various states of his own empire. He felt the importance of securing his beloved daughter's undisputed title to the throne, while the Empress' motherly heart rejoiced at each hardly won acknowledgment of the rights of her child, who already showed signs of such splendid promise.

But it was not alone in such well-grounded and

well-directed efforts that the parents' care showed itself: no pains were spared to develop to the fullest extent Maria Theresa's abundant mental gifts and talents, so as to fit her for her future position as ruler of an empire; nor did the noble mother fail to sow the seed and nourish the growth in her daughter's tender nature of those womanly virtues which were to bear such rich harvest.

With loving eyes the wise and careful Empress watched over the early training of the Princess' mind, — a mind which warranted the brightest hopes of all those to whose hands her education was intrusted. As may be readily understood, these instructors were selected from among the most distinguished ladies of the Court; the Countesses von Thurn and Valsassina, von Stubenberg and von Fuchs. They worked in perfect accord with the august mother upon whose breast God had placed the precious jewel, and to whose care He had intrusted the treasure. Later, as it became necessary for her to occupy herself with more serious and important subjects, learned and capable men were assigned the task of guiding the clear and active mind of the Princess through the departments of religion, history, and other

branches of learning, the comprehension of which was deemed necessary. The study of languages, too, was begun at an early age and covered a wide range, as it was important that the future ruler of Austria should be familiar with the various tongues spoken within her dominions, and thus be able to dispense with interpreters who might, and indeed must inevitably, stand between her and her people to a certain extent. Above all, it was requisite that she should not only understand Latin but speak it fluently, since that was the language spoken in Hungary; and almost equally important was a knowledge of French, Italian, and Spanish. The most accomplished masters were chosen by the imperial parents, and equal care was bestowed on the choice of teachers for music, drawing, and painting.

My young readers will perceive from this that the Archduchess had no easy tasks to perform.

Though, as compared with the requirements of our times, such an education may seem defective in many respects, still it bore surprising fruit, due largely to the remarkable endowments of her who received it; she made such good use of it that it was possible for her not only to assume the high position that devolved upon her at an early age, but to

maintain it with strength and dignity through all the troubled period of her minority.

The following incident confirms the truth of this statement. Maria Theresa was sixteen years of age when the important and complicated question of the election of a king of Poland was to be decided by the King's councillors. The imperial maiden entered the council chamber at her father's side, to take part in the deliberations of the foremost statesmen of the empire, and bore herself with a grace and dignity that excited universal admiration. She listened with grave attention to the wise words of the councillors, but when it came her turn to express her opinions, at her father's desire, the astonishment of the ministers was unbounded, as was the Emperor's delight also, at the clearness and accuracy of her judgment, and the acuteness and keenness of her perceptions.

This is given as a proof of her clear understanding and early maturity of mind, but it must not be supposed that these qualities detracted in any way from her feminine charms. Indeed, her kindness of heart, delicacy of thought, and above all her moral purity and lofty strength of purpose, combined to form a personality which seemed born to

*MARIA THERESA in the Council Chamber*

rule by divine right over the hearts of men, as well as to sway the sceptre of a mighty Empire; nor was her power lessened by a physical beauty and grace that made her the envy of all the princesses of Europe.

As she approached the age when the question who should one day share the throne with her had to be seriously considered, its political bearing began to assert itself; personal views were taken less into account than careful calculations as to what would benefit the crown and state and serve to increase the national importance and influence. The Emperor and his consort had already discussed the question privately, before any of the foreign princes had turned their glances toward the throne and the heiress herself.

An old tradition, to the effect that the crown of Spain would one day be joined again to that which was to adorn the beautiful head of Maria Theresa, was much talked of in Vienna, and with even more seriousness in Madrid. It came to nothing, however, and this laid the foundations of a deep and lasting enmity in Spain toward Austria. Other alliances, too, were discussed and rejected. Whether the affections of the Princess were involved in any of them is doubtful, especially as there happened to

be a certain prince staying at the imperial court in Vienna who lacked none of the attractions of mind or person that particularly fitted him for success in his wooing. This was Francis Stephen, son of Duke Leopold and Hereditary Prince of Lorraine, who was somewhat older indeed than the youthful Archduchess, but worthy of her in every way. He had succeeded to the dukedom of Lorraine on his father's death, and there seemed no obstacles to the alliance, either personal or political, when an approaching war-cloud relegated all thoughts of marriage into the background.

The centre of disturbance in those days was Poland, a part it has repeatedly played since, under other circumstances and conditions. The throne of this unhappy land was vacant, and the number of claimants, with the variety of their pretensions, made it a veritable apple of discord. Charles VI supported the claim of the Elector of Saxony, but France, cherishing an old grudge, had other plans, and took up arms against Austria. The war did not last long, for Charles was anxious for peace; but many important changes resulted, which reduced Austria's possessions in Italy, and Maria Theresa's betrothed, instead of remaining Duke of Lorraine,

was made Grand Duke of Tuscany. After peace had been declared, preparations were resumed for the marriage of the affianced pair. The nuptials were celebrated with the greatest splendor; but unfortunately the joy and satisfaction which the occasion brought the Emperor were embittered by the disastrous results of a war with Turkey, which made the death of Prince Eugene,[1] "der edler Ritter," even more keenly felt, since all that his sword had won for Austria was lost again through the incompetency of other commanders. Not long after this, the happy young couple began their triumphal journey to Tuscany, the sovereignty of which had devolved upon the consort of the Archduchess.

The Emperor Charles' most ardent desire, to see a male heir born of this happy union, was not to be fulfilled; he was forced to close his eyes full of anxiety as to the continuation of his line and crushed

[1] Prince Eugene, one of the greatest of the world's generals, was born at Paris, October 18, 1663, and died at Vienna, April 21, 1736. He entered the service of Austria in 1683; defeated the Turks in 1697; at the outbreak of the Spanish war of the succession invaded Italy; joined Marlborough in Germany; and defeated the French and Bavarians at Blenheim in 1704. In 1706 he drove the French out of Italy, and in 1708 won the great victories at Oudenarde, Lille, and Malplaquet. War breaking out afresh with Turkey, he won the great battle at Belgrade against overwhelming odds, and forced the Turks to accept peace. The year of Maria Theresa's nuptials, 1736, was the year of his death.

by the fatal peace of Belgrade, which had been such a blow to him. His death occurred on October 20, 1740. The inheritance which he bequeathed to Maria Theresa, as his heiress and successor, consisted of little territory beyond what Prince Eugene's sword had won and secured. Austria's possessions had become greatly diminished by the results of unfortunate wars. The great leaders and nobles of the Empire, instead of working together to insure the stability of the much-talked-of Pragmatic Sanction, or, what was even more important, to fill the treasury and establish and maintain an army that should command respect, had ceased to be of any help or support to the Emperor; while an exceedingly lavish and brilliant Court swallowed up more than the country's resources warranted. So when Maria Theresa came to the throne, the state treasury was almost empty, the army large only on paper; in short, everything was lacking, and no order or system existed anywhere.

The Emperor was a kind-hearted, cultivated, and high-minded man, but not the kind of a ruler demanded by the condition of affairs and the importance of his position. He had a natural taste for art and learning, and sympathized with all that was lofty and

noble. He was also devoted to the welfare of his people and indefatigable in all that pertained to their good; but in matters that concerned the political position of Austria, he lacked the necessary firmness and energy. Thus, while in some ways Maria Theresa had only to maintain what her noble father had planned and begun, in others she was obliged to act on her own responsibility and strive to remedy evils that needed a stronger and more masculine hand than is often possessed by a woman. But to her had been granted the clear, judicious mind and resolute spirit of a born ruler; she was singularly fitted for the difficult task, and what a man might not have been able to accomplish even under the most favorable circumstances, the woman and youthful Empress effected with the happiest results. It was no easy task for her, however, and the eyes of Europe were fixed expectantly, if somewhat doubtfully, on the fair young Princess who had grasped the reins of government under such difficult conditions.

One plan had been suggested to her which, viewed in the light of subsequent events, must have made a strong impression on her mind. When the question of choosing a consort for the Emperor's

beautiful and promising daughter had been uppermost, Prince Eugene of Savoy proposed a union with the Crown Prince Frederick of Prussia, he who afterward deservedly won for himself the title of "the Great"; and with his wonderful foresight and sagacity — indeed, it would almost seem with a prophetic vision of the future — strongly urged the execution of his plan. He did not succeed in uniting these two great hearts and minds, yet it shows how free from prejudice the great hero was. How different might the history of Europe have been had this dream of the knightly hero been realized! How far-reaching the consequences, extending even to our own times! How much, alas! that must be lamented, might Germany perhaps have been spared! But it was otherwise decreed in that high tribunal which rules all human affairs and speaks the irrevocable words, — "Thus Shall It Be!"

Maria Theresa was not yet twenty-four years old when she ascended the throne. She, whose insight was so clear and judgment so unerring, could not disguise from herself that her task was a hard one. The gravity of it was ever present before her, but she never allowed herself to be cast down or dis-

couraged. She was ill, too, when the Emperor closed his eyes upon the troubles of this world, and sorrow for her honored father, together with the magnitude of her undertaking, lay heavily upon her heart; but with a devout glance to heaven, a fervent prayer for help to the source of all strength and courage, her lofty spirit rose again with the consciousness of divine aid and a firm resolve to fulfil the duties that had been imposed upon her. The leaders who should have been a support to her were more overcome by the Emperor's death than the devoted daughter who was able to conquer her grief so heroically, and she was compelled to take the lead, and revive their faltering spirits by her powerful will and lofty courage.

She had chosen for her motto one that she lived up to in thought and deed from the first to the last day of her reign, and of which all her acts and ideas bore the impress, namely, *Justitia et Clementia*, or, in English, "Justice and Clemency." There was very soon a brilliant illustration of the latter quality. It was a time of want and distress for the poor, and one of the first acts of her reign was to throw open the well-filled imperial granaries and induce the great lords in her dominions to do the

same. Is it any wonder that the people loved her with an enthusiastic devotion, and revered her as an angel sent to them from God? A second act, which quickly followed, completed this impression and strengthened its effect. Large herds of deer had been allowed to overrun the country and become a scourge to the industrious peasants, who were compelled to look on quietly while the animals, protected by law, grazed without hindrance over their cultivated fields, or suffer the heaviest penalties if they resisted. During the preceding year it had been the cause of an uprising in Styria, and the leaders of the rebellion had been condemned to death. Here were two great wrongs to be redressed, and the Empress did not hesitate to use the proper means. She caused the deer to be shot and their flesh publicly sold at the lowest prices, and pardoned those under sentence of death in Styria, but at the same time did not allow the insurgents to escape without any punishment. Her motto, "Justice and Clemency," had become the rule of her life, and it was thus she entered upon her lofty and difficult sphere of action, with the God of justice and clemency ever before her eyes and in her heart.

That many reforms were necessary was everywhere made clear by the pressure of obsolete customs and ideas; but that they could be effected so promptly and thoroughly was more than any one had dared to hope. How could it have been expected that a woman, however wise, talented, and full of lofty aims, should understand the condition of the country well enough to decide at once upon the changes that were necessary, and be able to lay her hand upon the proper means for bringing them about?

The surprising fact, however, was brought to light that the young ruler was fully acquainted with the state of affairs in her realm and with the causes of the principal evils, which astonished the people as much as it did her ministers, to whom she had already revealed this unsuspected sagacity and penetration at their first conference, thereby causing some uneasiness to agitate the old gentlemen's powdered wigs and make them anxious to assist her in her reforms.

Maria Theresa already had realized the force of the advice Prince Eugene had so strongly urged upon her father. The army was utterly demoralized; the officers had unlimited leave of absence,

and frequently lived in Vienna or anywhere they chose, except with their regiments and in their quarters. So it was like a thunderbolt to them when the young Empress issued orders for the immediate return of all officers to their regiments, and for the army to be increased and placed upon such a footing that a sudden outbreak of war should not find it unprepared; but at the same time she won the devotion of the entire army by thus infusing fresh life and vigor into the almost paralyzed service, and also by another act of clemency. The leading officers, colonels and generals, who had been held responsible for the results of the last disastrous Turkish war, and been made to pay heavily for their mistakes by dismissal and imprisonment, were not only liberated but restored to all their former honors and dignities. The effect of this upon the army was magical, and the shout of Hungary in later days, "We will die for our Empress!" swept through the army in an enthusiastic expression of devotion and reverence, which was also shared by the officers' families.

Charles VI had been harshly blamed for the enormous sums swallowed up by the imperial household. The retinue of well-paid officials and

retainers was so numerous that they only hindered the business at Court instead of promoting it, and the salaries were out of all proportion to the services rendered. Fraud and peculation, too, were not wanting, and Maria Theresa found herself burdened with a household which cost the state more than the important affairs of government. With her clear insight and resolute will, it was but a short step from perception to action. She determined that as far as was consistent with the dignity of the Court, it should be regulated according to the system that prevailed in lower ranks of life; the spirit of display and show should be curbed, and a judicious economy introduced. Dismissals accordingly took place at once, salaries were decreased, many unnecessary expenses done away with, and a strict inspection of household accounts and expenditures instituted; and, as Maria Theresa's consort also brought his influence to bear in the control and regulation of this as of other departments of state finances, matters began to assume a very different appearance, and the ever-pressing need for money disappeared. The people, too, were delighted to see that their beloved young ruler understood the management of her vast household as well as any thrifty

German housewife. As in her administration of the affairs of the Empire she showed a masculine clearness and certainty in deciding between what was proper or improper, right or wrong, so here also her feminine instincts for order and the practical management of domestic affairs were conspicuous.

How much Maria Theresa loved and respected her husband is shown very plainly in the fact that she could not bear to have him occupy an inferior position to her, and that she spared no pains to make a way for him toward imperial honors. Scarcely a month after their accession, she made him co-regent and bestowed upon him the electoral dignities which belonged to the crown of Bohemia, thereby displaying not only her affection for him but also her womanly tact and diplomacy. She realized the strained relations with foreign courts that existed in Austria, and well knew that only the slightest provocation was needed to involve her in terrible wars. Thus it was a question not only of gratifying the dictates of her own heart, but also of guarding against any errors or false steps which her foes might seize upon and make an excuse for active enmity; and she succeeded in this in a

masterly manner, though more depended upon the observance of forms and ceremonies than their real significance warranted. It was of the highest importance not to give offence anywhere; for although the so-called Pragmatic Sanction had been recognized in many quarters, — a recognition too often purchased by her father at a heavy sacrifice, — it was by no means certain that objections might not yet be raised against the step, as well as against her elevation of her husband to imperial honors, and that would mean war. It was therefore a relief and satisfaction to her that the States of her Empire did not delay in pronouncing their hearty concurrence in both measures. When some who opposed them showed their disapproval by an absurd attempt to assert their authority, the kindly sovereign maintained a discreet silence and ignored it. Bavaria, indeed, asserted claims to the crown of Bohemia; but when Maria Theresa, in reply, sent troops to the disputed kingdom, a wholesome fear weakened the ambition of Bavaria, and the hint was sufficient to prevent any further trouble.

So Maria Theresa's throne seemed firmly established both at home and abroad. She had a loyal,

devoted people on one side and an enthusiastic army on the other, to support her, and looked cheerfully and hopefully into the future, where no gathering storm, no lowering clouds, appeared to threaten her peace and security.

# *Chapter II*

## *Campaigns against Prussia, France, and Bohemia*

AND yet — ! Where the Spree winds along between its sandy banks, a young eagle was beginning his flight toward the sun. Prince Eugene, "the gallant knight," had seen more clearly than he whose eyes were fixed only on the Pragmatic Sanction. His good counsel had shared the fate of all well-meant advice which earns no thanks and is rarely followed, and there was no one now at the imperial court who had Eugene of Savoy's far-seeing vision in matters of statecraft. But the eagle had already spread his pinions, and though he had but one head, to be sure, yet what a head it was ! This eagle was the young King of Prussia, Frederick, second of the name.

The year 1740 had witnessed new rulers upon two thrones : upon the smaller, and, one might say, still embryonic one, a man ; upon the greater, already established, a woman ; both young, ener-

getic, and richly endowed by nature, both the foremost figures of their time.

The proverb, "Two hard stones seldom grind well," has much truth in it, and none the less if the word "hard" be taken in a figurative sense. Thousands of heads and hearts were agitated by the question, how these two European monarchs of equal birth and capabilities would get on together. Would not all their power be exerted to obtain the supremacy? And in this struggle, to use a popular but expressive phrase, would not "the fur fly"?

It was only in Vienna that people were deceived as to Frederick's strength. Those immediately about the gifted young King were little concerned as to the outcome of any warlike complications, for from the very earliest days of his reign he had been strengthening and equipping his army. A well-filled treasury also favored his secretly cherished plan of claiming the Duchy of Silesia, and winning back with the sword what he considered his own inheritance, according to some old agreement concerning the succession.[1] His army advanced suddenly

[1] Frederick contended that he inherited a lawful claim to Silesia, and that the Pragmatic Sanction, which his father had recognized, referred only to lands belonging to the house of Austria.

against Silesia, and he followed it immediately after a court ball in Berlin, where no one had the least suspicion of his intention. He despatched Count Gotter to Vienna, it is true, to state the terms by which war could be averted;[1] but Austria would not consent to them, and while these brief negotiations were being conducted, Frederick's army had already set foot upon the frontier of Silesia.

This news fell upon the Austrian sovereign like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky; but the die was cast, the torch of war alight. To resign Silesia voluntarily never entered her mind for a moment, but alas! her father's indifference to Prince Eugene's wise counsel was now bearing fruit. Although not willing to accept Frederick's terms for a peaceful settlement of the question, Maria Theresa realized fully the difficulties of her situation, and hastily called upon those who had recognized the Pragmatic Sanction to redeem their promises and lend her some substantial support now that so powerful an assault had been made upon this meas-

[1] Frederick offered to aid Maria Theresa against all her enemies if she would concede his claims upon Silesia, but the Queen haughtily declined, and even intimated that Frederick was a robber.

ure. But she only had to face the bitter experience expressed in the old saying:

> "Friends in prosperity —
> Each will weigh a pound;
> But to the ounce, in time of need,
> A thousand may be found!"

Those whom she summoned to her aid shrugged their shoulders, and sympathized, but made no move to array themselves on her side. It is the way of the world, and in this dark hour Maria Theresa was forced to learn, in bitterness of spirit, that there is a vast difference between words and deeds.

There was not much time for choice. The situation must be met at once; but the Austrian force in Silesia was too small to build any hopes upon. Browne[1] collected an army in Moravia; but to cross the mountains by bad roads and at an unfavorable time of year was a task not easily or quickly accomplished, so that, thanks to his own

[1] Count Maximilian Ulysses von Browne, an Austrian field-marshal, was born at Basel, Switzerland, Oct. 23, 1705, and died at Prague, Bohemia, June 26, 1757. He was a commander both in the War of the Austrian Succession and the Seven Years' War.

energy and his well-equipped and disciplined army, Frederick made a rapid advance, and had gained possession of the most important places before Browne's troops could get near enough to attempt any effective movements. When the cannon finally thundered at Mollwitz, Schwerin[1] gained a brilliant victory over the Austrians, little in his favor as the conflict promised to be at first.

The loss of this battle was a great disaster, and the saying that troubles never come singly proved true likewise. Thus encouraged, all the enemies of Austria, who until now had prudently hidden their real animosity under the mask of friendship, threw off their disguise and openly arrayed themselves on the side of the young King of Prussia. The aggrandizing spirit of France, ever casting covetous glances toward the Rhine, made itself most actively felt, but intrigues were rife everywhere, and already there was talk of a division of the Austrian Empire among its enemies.

Whether all these castles were to prove only

[1] Count Kurt Christoph Schwerin, a German general, was born at Wusecken, Pomerania, Oct. 26, 1684, and was killed at the battle of Prague, May 6, 1757. He was made a field-marshal by Frederick the Great, and won the important victory of Mollwitz, a Silesian village.

castles in the air depended now on Maria Theresa. Old Austrian statesmen might doubtfully shake their bewigged heads, but their youthful ruler never wavered. Not a finger's breadth of Silesia would she surrender; at no price would she voluntarily part with any of her inheritance. She well knew what her duty required, and the birth of a son (afterward the great Emperor Joseph II) vindicated this noble woman's firmness and masculine strength of purpose. Her heart was full of faith and courage, and the joy her maternity brought her was shared by the people, who showed a touching devotion to her. This was the foundation upon which she built her hopes; and it was strong enough to warrant confidence in Austria's future, though the present looked dark enough.

England made an effort to mediate between Maria Theresa and her adversary, but Frederick rejected any compromise and demanded the cession of Silesia, with the threat that if it were not yielded to him he would seize not only it, but four other duchies beside. He could always be depended on to keep his word, especially when he made emphatic statements, and Maria Theresa's cause seemed lost before it really was so. But she stood firm as a rock,

in spite of her increasing danger; in spite of the faintheartedness of her ministers; in spite of the plots of her enemies; in spite of Frederick II's confidence. At any cost the war must be carried on; she must not allow herself to be humbled. The time for negotiation was past; action must take its place; words were useless, deeds must decide.

Maria Theresa's prospects were dubious. The French had crossed the Rhine with a large force and joined Bavaria. Passau was taken by surprise; Linz had fallen; even Vienna was threatened, and would have been obliged to surrender had the enemy pressed its advantage that far.

Maria Theresa had been active in her preparations in the meantime. The love of the people for their distressed ruler showed itself everywhere. Men flocked to the recruiting stations, and all who were able hastened to take up arms. In Vienna there was the greatest enthusiasm; all work in the shops ceased, and thousands of strong arms toiled at the neglected fortifications of the imperial city. Neither were there only men's hands at work, for women and young girls were to be seen in the ranks of the toilers, laboring indefatigably,

just as it had been when Kara Mustapha had approached Vienna, and Kolonitzsch and the old hero Stahremberg led the defence.[1] Everywhere the greatest interest was felt in the fate of the beautiful, unfortunate Princess, and the women especially, both of her own and foreign countries, showed the warmest sympathy, while in England they vied with one another in contributing money for her treasury, knowing that she greatly needed such assistance. But her foes were too many and too strong for her, and all these efforts would have been in vain had not Hungary, with chivalrous self-sacrifice, lent its aid to the Princess who wore its sacred crown also.

Maria Theresa had won the love of the Hungarians, and this conquest now bore her golden fruit, for the love of a people is the only lasting bulwark of a throne. Certain States, however, to assert their own importance, seemed determined to break down this bulwark. But when she appeared in the midst of the assembly of the Hungarian States, her deeply troubled look and the appeal that sprang from her

1 This refers to the time when the Hungarians revolted and called upon the Turks to help them. The latter, under Kara Mustapha, besieged Vienna in 1683, which was only saved by an army of Poles and Germans under Sobieski (John III, King of Poland), in which Kolonitzsch and Stahremberg were conspicuous.

*"WE are ready to die for our Empress"*

overladen heart fired the nobles with wild enthusiasm. "We are ready to die for our Queen, Maria Theresa!" rang from every throat and welled out from every heart as an oath of fidelity, and the unanimous resolution was at once taken to aid her with all their forces.

Maria Theresa was deeply affected; she burst into tears, and who does not know the effect that tears in a woman's eyes have upon the hearts of men? When Maria Theresa's consort had been acknowledged as co-regent by the Hungarians, the oath taken, and she held up her little son Joseph before the Diet at that solemn moment, such a burst of enthusiasm followed that they swore afresh their willingness to die for their Queen, and declared firmly that if money were needed for the war they would cast all their gold and silver ornaments and vessels into the smelting-pot, — indeed, were this not enough, even the treasures of the Church should be added.

If anything could have comforted Maria Theresa's mind and raised her spirits, it would have been this experience. There is not much danger of a tottering throne where the people are so ready to prove their devotion by any sacrifice; and what

Hungary promised it faithfully performed. At this time the mixture of peoples along the Danube, where it approaches the Turkish possessions, with the tribes that Russia in Asia had contributed, could hardly have been equalled for wildness and barbarity. They were good light horsemen, and always ready when it was a question of destruction and pillage; but in open warfare against the well-drilled Prussians they stood but a doubtful chance. Nevertheless, they had Cossacks among them that had not done badly in harassing the French. The Hungarians, though headed by a nobility of their own, had only these people to depend on, but they were better than nothing, and the fifteen thousand nobles with their followers made a heavy balance in the scales. Every heart was full of enthusiasm for the noble woman who was so hard pressed, and while their forces were being organized — for an army is not raised by the stroke of a magic wand — this sentiment deepened continually.

While the hostile army had already advanced as far as Linz, the Queen hoped for assistance from England in the shape of gold from London and troops from Hanover, but it seemed in truth as though all help would be cut off. Even when

George II of England had raised an army in Hanover, the French, under Maillebois, marched up through Westphalia, and the English began to find Hanover uncomfortable. With an Englishman charity begins at home, and George's "skin was nearer to him than his shirt," as the saying goes, so he made the best terms he could with the French, and abandoned Maria Theresa in spite of all his chivalrous protestations.

With France, Bavaria, and Saxony threatening her on one side, Prussia on the other, and as yet no army to oppose them with any hope of success, what could be more welcome than a settlement with Frederick II, arranged by England's mediation, and to which Frederick gladly agreed, since it secured him the possession of Silesia and averted the danger that seemed impending from the attitude of the Elector of Bavaria? The treaty was signed at Oberschnellendorf, but absolute secrecy was to be maintained concerning it. Thus Maria Theresa acquired, in this direction, at least, a free hand; and it was very necessary, for Bavaria and France were seriously threatening the capital of Bohemia, whence the Elector of Bavaria might have taken Vienna at a single blow, but, allured by the prospect

of a crown, the attraction in Bohemia was too strong.[1]

Such was the state of affairs when Maria Theresa's army of sixty thousand men entered Bohemia and rapidly advanced toward Prague, hoping to be able to relieve the city, which had a garrison of only three thousand and was in no condition to hold out against an army like that of united France, Bavaria, and Saxony, which was pressing it hard. There could be no question of a long resistance; therefore haste was necessary for the Austrians if they were to be of any service. But they came too late. Prague had fallen, and the Elector of Bavaria was crowned King of Bohemia. This, however, to him, was but a step toward the Imperial Crown, which he already saw upon his head. Therefore, no sooner were the coronation ceremonies ended than he established a regency in Prague, hastened to Munich, and from thence by way of Mannheim to Frankfort-on-the-Main. One thought, one hope, sustained Maria Theresa after this bitter blow, —

[1] Karl Albrecht, Elector of Bavaria, subsequently Charles VII, was born at Brussels, Aug. 6, 1697, and died at Munich, Jan. 20, 1745. He was a claimant of the Austrian inheritance, took part in the War of the Succession, was proclaimed King of Bohemia in 1741, and crowned Emperor in 1742.

namely, that her husband would be chosen Emperor at the electoral assembly then being held at Frankfort; but here, too, a fresh disappointment awaited her. The Elector of Bavaria's successes in Bohemia added powerfully to his influence, and he was elected Emperor January 30, 1742, his coronation following, February 12 of the same year. That Maria Theresa should refuse to acknowledge him was but natural, and, as she denied the validity of the election, that she should refuse to deliver the imperial archives was also natural.

The Elector of Bavaria at last had reached the summit of his ambitions, but it was also the turning point; thenceforward his path led downward, and victory turned toward Maria Theresa's colors. Scarcely was the crown placed on his head, when his own capital, Munich, fell into the hands of Maria Theresa. Her husband had succeeded in Bohemia, with the gallant Khevenhüller's assistance, in winning the Hungarians to him and cutting off the enemy's forces there from those which remained in Austria, and thus began a campaign that meant destruction to the audacious foe. In Bavaria the Austrians carried all before them, and Maria Theresa's victorious banner was soon waving over all that province.

This state of things naturally attracted the attention of Frederick II, and drew him again into the field of action. As the agreement to keep the treaty of Oberschnellendorf had been broken, he no longer felt bound by his own promise. He again joined forces with the hard-pressed Elector, the new Emperor, and a fresh war-torch was set ablaze, which alarmed Maria Theresa more than the old one. Frederick's arms were victorious, his activity in making alliances against Austria unceasing, and when the Zieten[1] hussars made inroads as far as Stockerau, destruction seemed hanging once more over Maria Theresa's head. The storm did not break, however, for Frederick found himself checked by Saxony, and the French were little inclined to play into the hands of Prussia. Frederick would gladly have consented to an adjustment of his relations with Austria, had it been possible; but the battles of Chotusitz and Czaslau changed the aspect of things, for they gave him the victory, though at a terrible sacrifice. Nevertheless, his view of the situation was not altered to such an extent that he did not still wish to end the

[1] Hans Joachim von Zieten was a famous cavalry officer in the Prussian army, and won distinction from a march with his hussars in 1745. He decided three of Frederick's victories, — Leuthen, Liegnitz, and Torgau.

war. With the same desire on both sides there could be but one result, and peace was signed at Breslau in the Summer of 1742.

By this treaty Frederick received the duchy of Upper and Lower Silesia and Glatz, and renounced all further claims on Maria Theresa. The boundaries were firmly fixed, and she won a free hand in this quarter, but with a loss that cut her to the heart. The finest jewel had been torn from her crown, and with a bleeding heart she had been forced to give it up in order to save the rest of her inheritance. On one side the flames of war were now extinguished, but on the other they still blazed fiercely. Her hopes were nearing fulfilment. The troops which she had been obliged to employ against Frederick could now be sent to oppose her other foes, and this was a great gain, for this division of her strength had been a constant source of anxiety to her, and with good reason. Bohemia next claimed her attention, and thither she sent the forces thus released. Nor was this the only reward so dearly bought by the peace of Breslau; for her friends were now encouraged to show their sympathy and offer her assistance. To win back Bohemia and its capital was her next important task.

In Italy the situation had improved for her — not without some sacrifice, it is true — and from there she could also send troops to Bohemia, to enable the Austrian army to invest Prague. In the besieged city were a body of French, and this caused as much anxiety in Paris as it did to Marshal Belle-Isle himself in Prague. He tried to make terms, but his schemes were frustrated, as well as the proposed negotiations for peace from Paris, by the resolute courage and firmness of the Empress. She would listen to none of Francis' proposals, none of Belle-Isle's plans for capitulation. She rejected both with noble pride and indignation, deeply as her refusal might be resented by France.

In Prague the distress of the French increased rapidly. The lack of provisions had become alarming. Belle-Isle had only one hope — the French auxiliary corps under Harcourt which Khevenhüller was holding back on the Danube. But could he count on it? The army on the lower Rhine was in the same predicament. Here, as there, a decided "Halt!" had been called to France, which she was compelled to obey. It seemed impossible that their comrades in Prague could expect any help from either of these quarters; yet neverthe-

less it came, at the express command of the King of France.

The commander-in-chief of the French on the lower Rhine, where an English force was opposing them, suddenly departed, leaving one division engaged with the English, and hastened unobstructed to Bavaria, where he was joined by a Bavarian army corps. At the same time Count Maurice of Saxony replaced Harcourt in the army on the Danube. He also contrived to elude Khevenhüller, and made all speed with the main body of his troops toward Maillebois' division. The bold stroke was successful, and while the besieging army, apprised of this new danger, was hastening to meet it, the beleaguered French tried to escape from Prague and join Maillebois. The attempt failed, however, as did that general's efforts to relieve the city. Closely invested as it now was by Lobkowitz, Prague could no longer hold out; for, in addition to the scarcity of food, they had to endure the bitter cold of Winter, and there was a lack of fuel also. He conducted the siege so carelessly, however, that Belle-Isle finally managed to escape with the French garrison and all the artillery and stores. Not till they were gone did the Austrians discover it and pursue them; but they

succeeded in reaching Eger, though with great suffering and loss. Those who were left behind in Prague would have been taken prisoners had not their leader made known to the Austrian commander that they must be allowed to retire with military honors, or he would set fire to the city and bury himself and all his troops under its ashes. Lobkowitz consented to their retreat in order to save Prague, and thus ingloriously took possession of the shattered city. Had Maria Theresa not had a kind and merciful heart, the inhabitants would have suffered even more than they had been called upon to endure; for many of those who had been so ready to help crown the Elector of Bavaria well deserved the punishment they thus escaped. Now that Bohemia as far as the city of Eger was once more her own, Maria Theresa was crowned with great pomp as Queen of Bohemia.

An anecdote in this connection will be of interest. A courier arrived from Charles VII, bringing a protest from him, as crowned King of Bohemia, against Maria Theresa's coronation. Smiling, she ordered the courier to be given a number of her gold coronation coins, with instructions to carry them back to his master without delay. This was done,

and doubtless the sight of the coins caused little pleasure in Munich.

Fortune now seemed to favor Maria Theresa everywhere. In Italy, too, events had shaped themselves to her advantage, and at the close of the year 1742 she could look cheerfully into the future, although the sky was not entirely cloudless; for in Italy there were many knots to be untied that only the sword could loosen.

The Spring saw banners waving and heard the roll of the drums in Bavaria. The Bavarian Field Marshal von Seckendorff, who had been ordered back to Munich by his lord and emperor, fell back across the Iser before Prince Charles of Lorraine and old Khevenhüller, who were pressing him hotly. The French general, Broglio, meanwhile inactive in Osterhof, watching these proceedings, made no response to Seckendorff's appeals. Nor was this retreat all; for, more important still, the whole division under General Minuzzi was completely crushed by the Austrians in a bloody battle, where Minuzzi himself was taken prisoner. This was a Spring greeting most joyfully received in Vienna, and which seemed but a forerunner of still further victories.

No sooner was this accomplished than Khevenhüller turned his attention to the French, whom he would gladly have shown the way across the Rhine. Broglio may have suspected this, and was so obliging as to relieve the old hero of this agreeable task, for at Khevenhüller's approach he turned his troops toward Ingolstadt (which was not forward) and kept his movements secret until he was across the Rhine, where twelve thousand men would reënforce him. Then, and then only, did he feel himself safe. Bavaria now realized what she was to expect from her light-footed allies, and sent them no thanks. Charles VII, too, knew at last upon what he had been relying and that he must once more bid farewell to his good city of Munich, if, indeed, he might not be obliged to occupy an unsought lodging in Vienna. Had he looked at this time at the coronation coins brought him by the courier from Vienna, it must have seemed that a mocking smile hovered about Maria Theresa's lips, and that she whispered softly but significantly, "*Auf wiedersehen!*" There was no choice left him but to enter into negotiations with Austria to protect his ancestral domains.

Maria Theresa, in the midst of her victorious career, offered the hand of peace. Charles VII

renounced his claims to the Austrian succession and, fortunately for the public tranquillity, left all the conquered territory in the possession of Austria. To guard against any future trouble Maria Theresa had all these States take the oath of allegiance to her, even though they might be only temporarily in her possession. This was a triumph for her which offset the homage received by Charles in Bohemia, — a return which he had well deserved and which he well understood without any further explanation.

Thus fortune still smiled upon Maria Theresa, here as elsewhere. The English army in the Netherlands had crossed the Rhine, and, advancing by way of Frankfort, received a large reënforcement and tried to effect a union with Khevenhüller and Prince Charles of Lorraine, who had pushed forward from the Upper Rhine. Marshal de Noailles was opposing them with a considerable force, but when he perceived their design he crossed the Rhine to attack the English. George II himself joined the army just then, fortunately, and a battle was fought at Dettingen, on the Main, which resulted in Noailles' retreat across the Rhine again. The King of England then held a council of war with Khevenhüller and the Prince at

Hainault to decide what course to pursue. It was agreed that King George should lead the way while the Austrian generals crossed the river at Basel and try to reach Lorraine, in order to take up Winter quarters in Champagne. This plan miscarried, however, and the Austrian army returned to Bavaria for the Winter, while King George, after destroying the French works on the Rhine, especially at Landau, withdrew again across the river and also went into Winter quarters, for Winter campaigns were not generally undertaken at that time.

Though the results of the wars Maria Theresa was waging against her enemies were most gratifying, the troubles in Italy still weighed like an Alp upon her heart. The Spanish general in command there had drawn upon himself, and not without cause, the reproach of negligence. A substitute had replaced him with urgent orders to retrieve the errors of his predecessor, and he might have been able to do so had he not had an adversary so brave, crafty, and well versed in the arts of war as the old field-marshal, Count Traun.

Already there had been a bloody battle, February 8, 1743, in which he had been the victor, but at this time negotiations were begun which put an end

to the bloodshed. They took place at Worms, between England, Sardinia, and Austria, and again was Maria Theresa obliged to resign some of her territory, this time in Sardinia, in order to effect the alliance. Scarcely were the terms completed, when Lobkowitz, who had succeeded old Traun in the command, advanced against the Spaniards and drove them back: whereupon the King of Sardinia struck the French-Spanish army such a blow that it was forced to retreat to the south of France for the Winter.

Though Maria Theresa had been unfortunate in having to relinquish more of her territory in this campaign, still, the armies were victorious, and all these circumstances had served to unite her more closely to her friends, and had given her a new ally in the person of the Elector Frederick Augustus IV of Saxony, with twenty thousand troops to assist her. Thus far the outlook was very bright; but by the close of the year 1743 new clouds foretold a gathering storm. The lion on the Spree had begun to stir and toss his mane. Frederick's army, which had once in jest been called the "Potsdam Night-watch Parade," was as little a subject for derision as he who commanded and was the soul of it.

# *Chapter III*

## *The Second Silesian War*

ALTHOUGH she had prepared for it carefully, Maria Theresa could not look forward with much confidence to this new struggle, which began in the Spring. Khevenhüller was dead, and she had shed tears of sorrow and gratitude for him, which the brave old soldier had well deserved from his sovereign. She felt the loss of his strong support in this war, upon which France, who heretofore had merely been an ally of the enemies of Austria, had now entered on her own account, in league with Spain.

The campaign began in the Netherlands, where a well-organized French army under capable leadership was arrayed against the combined forces of Austria, Holland, and England, the latter being under various commands and far inferior in numbers. The advantage, therefore, was decidedly with the French. To offset this, an Austrian force was sent to invade Alsace, which was occupied by French and Bavarian

troops. It was led by Prince Charles of Lorraine and brave old "Father Traun," as the soldiers called the old Count, who was universally beloved by them. In the Netherlands fortune favored the French; in Alsace, the Austrians. Prince Charles of Lorraine marched triumphantly into Lorraine, and his light cavalry made inroads as far as the environs of Lüneville, where he was checked by fresh forces under able generals sent from France to oppose his victorious advance.

Such was the state of affairs beyond the Rhine when the second Silesian war involved Maria Theresa in fresh troubles. Frederick II, who was anxious about the safety of his newly acquired possessions, had taken advantage of the peace further to strengthen his army and make all his preparations for a campaign. Moreover, he understood how to fill the public treasury without seeming to impair the resources or prosperity of the people — certainly a great and rare art.

At this important juncture, when Maria Theresa's attention was fully occupied in the Netherlands and in Alsace, he had a well-equipped army of one hundred and twenty thousand men, an abundance of stores and ammunition, and, above all, plenty of

money at his command, which Montecuculi[1] rightly called the first, second, and third requirements for conducting a war, and of which Austria had never possessed a surplus, least of all now. Frederick's apprehensions concerning Silesia were strengthened by the fact that, since the peace of Breslau, Maria Theresa's power had increased to such an extent that with the assistance of her allies she might easily plan to reconquer the province whose loss she had never forgotten; indeed, he felt sure this would be the case. He followed one of his own precepts when he took up the sword again, "that it is always the greatest folly not to anticipate a disaster, if one hopes to avert it." Nevertheless, he clearly realized the advantages of an alliance with the neutral German princes, and tried hard to bring it about; and when this plan failed, he joined forces with France, the Emperor Charles VII, and others, thus insuring the success of his plans.

Maria Theresa's heart sank when she heard of

[1] Count Raimondo Montecuculi was born at Modena, Italy, in 1608, and died at Linz, Austria, in 1680. He served with great distinction in the Thirty Years' War; commanded the Austrian army which was sent to Poland against the Swedes and Transylvanians, 1657–60; gained a great battle over the Turks at St. Gotthard in 1664; and fought Turenne and Condé on the Rhine from 1672 to 1675. He wrote a famous treatise on the art of war, from which the saying above attributed to him is quoted.

this, but trust in God and the justice of her cause sustained her, as these words of hers prove: "God knows my right; He will protect me as He has hitherto done!" Many letters were exchanged between Frederick and herself, each charging the other with breaking their treaty; but it was of no avail. War was finally declared, ostensibly in behalf of the Emperor Charles VII, and Frederick's army, one hundred thousand strong, invaded Bohemia, while a part of it was sent to guard Kurmark[1] and Silesia. Saxony was stunned when Frederick without further ceremony crossed its frontiers, and made some fruitless attempts at resistance, but Zieten cleared the way with his huzzars, and in an incredibly short time Frederick was before Prague.

Maria Theresa called out the militia of the country to meet the danger; but of what avail was the militia against the invincible Prussians? Where should she turn for aid in her extremity but to her loyal Hungary? She hastened to Presburg, where once more her words and her beauty kindled a blaze of enthusiasm and devotion, and almost as if sprung from the earth forty thousand Hungarians

[1] Kurmark was the old name for the larger portion of Brandenburg, Prussia.

stood ready to fight for her; thirty thousand more formed the reserve, and ten thousand were hurriedly despatched to Bohemia to oppose Frederick. This was the work of the old Palatine Palffy, who was no longer able to do any fighting himself. Maria Theresa wrote him that charming letter which will ever remain a model in the art of saying much in few words, and with it sent her finest horse, a costly jewelled sword, and a valuable diamond ring. She wrote:

"My Father Palffy, — I send you this horse, which is worthy of being mounted only by the noblest of my subjects; accept also this sword to defend me against my enemies, and keep this ring as a token of my lasting affection.

Theresa."

The sending of the letter and the gifts was soon known all over Hungary, and its effect upon a people so easily roused to enthusiasm, and at the same time ready to devote themselves to her cause with the last drop of their blood, may well be imagined. Before help could arrive, however, Frederick had taken Prague, and several other important cities also fell into his hands. The friends of Maria Theresa began to lose courage, but not she!

When the Hungarians arrived, she forced Saxony into some decisive course and recalled Prince Charles of Lorraine to Bohemia.

Notwithstanding the difficulty of such an undertaking against so powerful an adversary, Prince Charles met with brilliant success, and the troops from Alsace were aided by auxiliary forces from Saxony. Old Count Traun found the plan of cutting Frederick off from Prague and conquering him by starvation an excellent one, and proceeded to carry it out in a masterly manner. Frederick sought to force his adversary into a battle, but the latter continually evaded him. Traun's light horsemen harassed his troops on every side and captured his provision train, while the Bohemians, with their Queen's soldiers, buried the stores in the ground and then made their escape in the forests. Frederick was beside himself with rage. His soldiers, suffering from hunger and every discomfort, quarrelled among themselves and deserted in large numbers, and at last, though much against his will, he was obliged to begin a retreat.

Thus the Austrians again came into possession of Bohemia, with but trifling losses; and old "Father Traun," thinking it wise to follow the Prussians,

even entered Glatz and Upper Silesia. Already it began to seem as though Maria Theresa might regain her beloved Silesia, when all at once the tables were turned.

The army imprudently had been allowed to scatter. The troops from Saxony had withdrawn and other divisions had been despatched elsewhere, when the Prussians suddenly turned and assumed the offensive, and Traun was obliged to retreat to Moravia. The Austrians struck a few more vigorous blows, and the campaign ended in both armies going into Winter quarters. Although she had been obliged to yield some advantages to Frederick, the campaign on the whole had resulted decidedly in Maria Theresa's favor. Frederick was disposed therefore to make peace, and signified his willingness to do so, but Maria Theresa rejected his overtures, since she had formed a new alliance with England, Holland, and Saxony, and now had a prospect of retrieving her losses and winning back Silesia, the lost jewel that had been torn from her crown.

With this bright outlook for the future, the Spring campaign was just beginning, when the Emperor Charles VII died, January 20, 1745. This event completely changed the aspect of affairs, and

the imperial crown, once possessed by her own house, seemed to Maria Theresa a prize worth any effort could she but see it placed upon the head of her consort.

Little heed was paid to the unfortunate Emperor's advice to his son, Maximilian Joseph, to make peace with Austria and banish all hopes of the imperial crown from his heart. The young Elector was only too ready to listen to ambitious schemers, but before the earth was fully decked with living green, all his hopes had perished. The victories of the Austrians compelled him, as they once had done his father, to fly from Munich. Then for the first time he realized the wisdom of his father's counsel, and refused to listen any longer to those who advised him to continue the struggle. He sued for peace, which was concluded on April 22, 1745, at Füssen. Austria restored all his conquered territory to him, while he renounced his claims to the succession, acknowledged Maria Theresa's rights under the Pragmatic Sanction, and promised her husband his vote at the imperial election. The Empress' heart beat high with joy, for this broke the alliance known as the "Frankfort Union," and Frederick II now stood alone. His situation became even more

threatening when Russia announced that she would permit no attack on Saxony, which amounted to an unequivocal if tacit declaration that in such a case she would join the league that had been formed in Warsaw between Austria, England, Holland, and Saxony, called the "Quadruple Alliance."

Frederick now concluded it was better to seek peace than to enter the lists against such odds; but all his attempts at negotiation were frustrated, notwithstanding the advantageous character of the conditions he offered. Maria Theresa was determined to have Silesia back again, but he would not agree to that. She then tried to win over Saxony, and in that she succeeded brilliantly. The prospect looked dark for Frederick II, for he also was in need of money. The royal plate had already found its way secretly to the mint, to reappear in silver coins, but that was insufficient. The King did not attempt to conceal the fact from himself that he stood on the edge of a precipice, but a spirit like his was not to be daunted by fear of threatening spectres.

The campaign finally reopened under these altered conditions. Maria Theresa sent eighty thousand of her troops, with thirty thousand Saxons, to

take possession of Silesia. This army was in high spirits, for it was rumored all over the country that Frederick was completely discouraged and disheartened by the misfortunes of the last campaign. No one suspected that he himself had caused this report to be circulated. He wanted to entice the Austrians across the mountains, and they walked into the trap. Frederick had taken up a position that would enable him to fall upon the enemy as it emerged from the mountains, and he awaited Prince Charles with perfect calmness and confidence. His concealed position completely deceived the Austrians; they supposed the small band of Prussians, which they had discovered from a mountain top, to be part of the rear-guard of the army retreating to Breslau.

When Frederick crossed the stream at Striegau on the morning of the fourth of June, his troops encountered two battalions of Saxons, who were not a little startled to meet with Prussians there. They halted to wait for the rest of the army to come up with them, but it had scarcely made its appearance when Frederick opened a murderous artillery fire. The Austrian cavalry hurled itself upon the Prussians, but was soon thrown into wildest confusion

and totally routed. The two Saxon battalions that had led the way were almost entirely cut to pieces, and the Austrians who followed shared the same fate. The Prince of Lorraine was thoroughly deceived, for he supposed the cannonading and fire of musketry came from the Saxons who were capturing Striegau. It did not occur to him, therefore, to send relief, for he still imagined the Prussians in full retreat toward Breslau. When at last he discovered the Saxons in disorderly flight and realized what had happened, he hastened to place his troops in order of battle, but before this could be accomplished the Prussians had attacked and routed them. Nothing was left for him, after five hours' hard fighting, but to turn about and escape by way of Hohenfriedberg. They were not pursued, for Frederick's army was too exhausted after the struggle. It was a terribly disastrous battle for Austria and Saxony, and for Frederick a victory which did not produce the results it seemed to promise.

Prince Charles withdrew to Bohemia, and took up a strong position there with the Saxons. Frederick followed, but did not dare to attack him while he was so strongly intrenched, and remained there inactive for three months, while the Austrians had

as little desire to assume the offensive before the arrival of reënforcements.

All this time the war in Flanders had been blazing fiercely, and the French had gained several victories over the allies. The King of England, George II, who had been placed in a very trying position by France, was anxious for Maria Theresa and Frederick to make terms with each other, and tried his best to bring it about. An agreement was actually drawn up, but when Maria Theresa found that the King of England had guaranteed the possession of Silesia to Frederick, she firmly refused to have anything more to do with it. Rather would she — and these were her own words — "part with the gown from her back than Silesia." She attached but little importance to the lost battle of Hohenfriedberg, and had perfect confidence in the judgment and bravery of Prince Charles of Lorraine and the loyalty of her Hungarians. Moreover, the prospects were good that the imperial crown would fall to her husband's lot. How then could she resign herself to the thought of sacrificing her beloved Silesia?

Her consort, Francis Stephen, was indeed elected Emperor and crowned under the name of Francis I,

and thus Maria Theresa's dearest wish was fulfilled. She had fresh hope and courage, and a vigorous prosecution of the war was ordered.

The plans of George II of England came to naught, and Frederick resumed hostilities, for the Empress would never consent to give up Silesia; but he knew his task was a hard one. In Silesia the Hungarians had taken Kosel. A part of his army was sent to recapture it and drive them out, in which it was successful. Another detachment went to join old Dessauer at Halle, to oppose the Saxons who were threatening Brandenburg. Frederick had but twenty-two thousand men to oppose a superior force of Austrians, and delay had placed them at a disadvantage; for it had enabled the enemy to approach so near that an attack could not be avoided. He determined therefore to change his position and move farther away; but just as he was about to put this plan into execution, Charles of Lorraine began his assault. It was on the morning of September 30, 1745, near Sohr. Frederick still had time to dispose his troops; then he hurled his cavalry against the Austrians. This was the beginning of a battle that resulted in a brilliant victory for the Prussians, for the infantry with magnificent

bravery followed the example of the cavalry. For five days Frederick's army camped undisturbed on the battlefield, and then moved toward Silesia to go into Winter quarters.

Once more there were hopes of peace, but it was not yet to be. In Vienna a Winter campaign had been determined on. The army was to advance directly to Berlin under the Prince of Lorraine. One division on the Rhine was to unite with Saxony in driving the Prussians from Halle, and then join the main army before Berlin. Maria Theresa's secret plans were betrayed, however, to the King of Prussia, and that enabled him to set every lever in motion to thwart her projects, in accordance with his favorite method, "anticipate the disaster." It was dangerous work for him, for Russia had promised to support Saxony in case of attack from Prussia, and the warning was repeated when Frederick announced his purpose; but strong measures were necessary, and he departed to join the main body of his army in Silesia. Here he learned that Prince Charles and the Saxons had invaded Upper Lusatia. After seeing that the Silesian frontier was well protected, therefore, he hastened with all possible secrecy to Lusatia and met the enemy at Kunersdorf. His

sudden attack was successful, and put an end to all hopes of taking Berlin by surprise. The unexpected appearance of the Prussians and their victory disheartened the Austrian army, and Prince Charles retreated to Bohemia.

Nor was this defeat all. Frederick summoned old Dessauer to Saxony, advanced against Dresden, and made an offer of peace to Saxony, but it was rejected. The sword had to settle the question, which it speedily did. The battle of Kesselsdorf was decisive; a bad blunder of the Saxons gave the victory to Prussia, and obliged Prince Charles to seek safety with his army. The defeated Saxons abandoned their capital, and Frederick entered Dresden, December 18, 1745. This opened the way for peace, and terms were made soon afterward by which Frederick definitely acknowledged Maria Theresa's right to the electoral vote of Bohemia and the validity of her husband's election as Emperor, but retained possession of Silesia.

Thus Austria, great as her losses had been in this war, had at least gained what the Empress so earnestly desired; but at the same time had been again obliged to leave Silesia in the hands of Prussia and put a good face on the matter. Saxony, on the

other hand, had felt the full weight of the conqueror's hand, and was glad to come out of it so cheaply after all. The treaty of Dresden also securely settled various other affairs of Maria Theresa's at home, which had been disturbed by the long and ruinous conflict.

## *Chapter IV*

### *Plots and Counterplots*

IN Italy, affairs proved even more disastrous. Genoa, which up to this time had remained neutral, now sided with Spain, Naples, and France, so that there was an addition of ten thousand men to the enemy's forces to be reckoned with when the campaign opened in May. This gave them an army of seventy thousand capable of crushing Austria and its ally Sardinia.

The outlook was dark for Maria Theresa when the Dresden Treaty was signed. While on the one hand it brought respite, on the other redoubled vigilance and energy were needed. The overburdened Empress breathed a little more freely, and calmly faced the situation in Italy, where she had sent reënforcements to the army and placed Prince Wenzel Lichtenstein in command. Thirty thousand fresh troops, with a *man* at their head, count for a great deal; the latter even more than the former, since any

number of troops without a competent leader can accomplish little.

The new campaign, in the Spring of 1746, began hopefully, and its promise was realized largely by an unforeseen event which occurred on the ninth of July and made an important change in the situation. This was the death of King Philip V of Spain,[1] and the succession to the throne of Ferdinand VI,[2] who was anxious for peace.

A change in the leadership of the Spanish forces in Italy had already weakened them, and the recall of six thousand men to Spain greatly increased Lichtenstein's advantage, as results were not slow in proving. The battle of the tenth of August disposed of the Spaniards as far as Maria Theresa's army was concerned, and left it free to chastise Genoa. That Republic, already alarmed at the turn of events, became panicstricken when the Austrians captured Bocchetta, and the Senate bowed its once proud neck

1 Philip V of Spain, the grandson of Louis XIV of France, was born at Versailles, Dec. 19, 1683; died at Madrid, July 9, 1746. He was called the Duke of Anjou until his succession to the Spanish throne, which caused the War of the Spanish Succession.

2 Ferdinand VI, born Sept. 23, 1712, was the son of Philip V, and succeeded his father in 1746. He was of a weak constitution and melancholy, and relinquished the affairs of government almost entirely to his counsellors. His melancholy eventually developed into insanity.

beneath the foot of the victor. The punishment it had so well merited was not lacking when the day of reckoning came. Maria Theresa magnanimously, indeed, sought to save Genoa from the depths of humiliation to which Botta relentlessly subjected it, for the crippled Republic had suffered enough, — and too much, as the sequel showed.

At this juncture, when the army was victorious and both ready and able to continue the work, Maria Theresa's plans were frustrated by the jealousy of England and Sardinia. The two allies felt obliged to turn their arms against Naples, which lay so near, and the result was obvious: the Empress was forced to abandon them and follow the French and Spaniards to Nice. The advance into Provence, however, was suddenly brought to a standstill, because of the harsh treatment Genoa had received. The bow had been bent too far, and it broke. A popular insurrection was the fruit of Botta's revenge. Austria's disregard of the fact that a people driven to desperation will risk everything — a fact unfortunately too often forgotten, in spite of the terrible examples in history, — cost it dearly; for, aside from its material losses in men and supplies, Botta's flight and the forced retreat of Browne from Provence

were bitter fruit. Nor was it made any less so by the loss of Genoa itself, and the fact that Austria had only itself to blame; for the brutal severity of the conqueror and his overbearing arrogance were alone responsible. Genoa retained its freedom after this, and the war was continued with varying results until the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle put an end to the bloodshed; but Austria had no cause to rejoice over this peace, and Maria Theresa felt it deeply.

The Queen, however, now turned her vigorous mind and generous sympathies into other channels than those which ran red with human blood, and devoted herself to the welfare of her people. War, even in its grandest aspect, is and must always be degrading to humanity and a source of untold misery. The old German saying that "Peace nourishes; strife consumes," is a true one. In spite of manifold disasters, Maria Theresa had emerged from the long struggle with success; she had defeated the efforts of her enemies to break her power, and had strengthened her empire. It had taken eight years of war; but the great Empress had not been through this hard school of experience without profiting much by it, even if her gains were not those of territory.

The eight years of peace that now ensued gave her time and opportunity to effect the reforms she had in mind, a work that appealed strongly to her and was worthy of her best endeavors. She had a wide field before her, for the weakness of the antiquated system of government bequeathed from the Middle Ages was felt on all sides. A great advance in civilization had been made during that period, and many cumbersome formalities had to be abandoned in order that the administration of affairs should be in sympathy with this development.

Maria Theresa grasped the situation clearly; she understood all this, as well as her own position and power and the country's needs. It was a woman in this case that proved the old saying, "One's self is the man"; for it was she herself who was the motive power in these salutary reforms; it was her own hand that guided the affairs of state and directed the reforms in the condition of her people.

Experience had taught her the value of Prince Eugene's advice to her father, which unfortunately for himself the latter had so little heeded; hence her first thought was for the reorganization of the army. Well as she knew its deficiencies, she showed no haste or precipitation in making the necessary

changes, but proceeded slowly though surely to the end she had in view. The wonderful personal influence and power of this remarkable woman were not the only evidences of her greatness; they were apparent also in her successful discovery of the right men, and assignment of them to positions where they would be most effective and accomplish the most good. The change brought about in the army was an illustration of this; not only was the discipline wonderfully improved, but so much spirit and enthusiasm were infused into it that at the beginning of the Seven Years' War Frederick the Great himself was forced to declare, "These are no longer the old Austrians!" But there was the same love and devotion for the Empress which had been manifested in the days of the first Silesian war, and the army submitted willingly and cheerfully to all her measures of reform.

In this work Maria Theresa had two faithful assistants, Count Daun, whose ancestral home was a stronghold in the volcanic mountains of Eifel and even in its ruined state a worthy cradle of a great race, and Prince Wenzel Lichtenstein. As Daun, one might say, created the infantry, so old Lichtenstein was the founder of the new artillery — two

branches of the service in which Frederick II was an adept. The cavalry, just as it stood, had served as a model for Frederick, but even in that branch of the service there was room for improvement. Maria Theresa devoted especial attention to the breeding of good horses for the cavalry, and took great interest in hospital work. It would take too long to go into all the details of this important work, but one of her remarkable achievements must not be overlooked. This was the construction of a line of defences, or "military frontier," along the Turkish border, which interposed an effective barrier against those invasions and unexpected attacks which had been so common in previous wars with that country.

If Maria Theresa's determined efforts to strengthen her army really meant that she had Silesia in her mind, who can blame her, especially when the affection with which she clung to that lost province and her inward conviction that two natures like hers and Frederick II's could never remain long at peace with one another, as was indeed the case, are considered?

With this problem of perfecting the army and fitting it for future service — possibly the re-conquest

of Silesia — was closely linked another, suggested by that saying of Montecuculi's already quoted; namely, that the requisites of war were, firstly, money; secondly, more money; and thirdly, more money again, and plenty of it. The second task that confronted Maria Theresa's dauntless spirit was the question of taxes, or, in a word, what we call finances. Austria was rich in resources, but there had been a lack of good management in their application. Judicious economy was much needed in this branch of the administration, and, remembering the extravagance and wastefulness that had prevailed in her father's time, the Empress began the reduction of expenses. This action and her realization that the proper remedy was to be obtained not by the imposition of crushing taxes on her subjects, but by developing the rich resources of the country, merely furnish further proofs of her political wisdom and statesmanship.

During the last war, the lack of funds in the treasury had made it necessary to impose heavy taxes to meet the deficiency, but the system was wrong, and failed to effect the desired object; it only made the taxes extremely burdensome, and its injustice increased the irritation and discontent of the

people. This was an evil that needed a remedy, as her unerring glance had long since discovered, and she lost no time in devoting all her energies to the establishment of a system wherein juster methods should be employed; there were so many who for various reasons were exempt from taxation, that it became absolutely necessary to limit the number. These reforms were received with great enthusiasm all over the land, and endeared her still more to the people.

Part of Maria Theresa's success was due to her judgment and sagacity in choosing for her advisers men of the highest talents and abilities, as well as to that unerring tact which is one of nature's best gifts to mankind, and which helped her here as it had with the army. Among her statesmen, she possessed in Kaunitz[1] not only an able and clever diplomatist, who filled the highest posts of honor

[1] Wenzel Anton Kaunitz, Count of Rietberg, was one of the most famous of European diplomatists. He was born at Vienna, Jan. 2, 1711. His first mission was the formation of an alliance of Austria, Sardinia, and Great Britain against the Bourbons. He laid the foundation of his fame at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748. Between 1750 and 1752 he concluded a secret alliance between France and Austria. In 1756 he was made Chancellor of the Netherlands and Italy, and at the partition of Poland in 1772 he secured Galicia for Austria. He directed the affairs of Austria for more than forty years, and was specially prominent in his resistance to the power of Prussia.

with credit to himself and his country, but also a faithful and devoted servant, and an invaluable aid to her in all her far-reaching plans. The one with which she was closely concerned at this time had been suggested by England. It was a proposal to retain the imperial crown of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation in her family, and make her son, the Archduke Joseph, King of Rome; thus giving him the right, on the death of her husband, to succeed him as Emperor, and prevent any more such destructive wars as those from which the country had already suffered. England had devised this scheme, and was willing to do its share toward bringing it about; but there were many obstacles in the way, not the least of them, Prussia. France was another; but Germany itself, for that matter, furnished difficulties enough to relegate its accomplishment to the far-distant future.

The Empress, strongly as the plan appealed to her, was cautious and said little, but England continued to urge the matter with a persistence that excited some doubt as to the sincerity of its attitude toward Austria. At last its motives became apparent, and Maria Theresa abandoned any further consideration of the plan. This caused somewhat

strained relations between the two countries. During the negotiations, moreover, England's behavior was such that Kaunitz, in defence of the dignity of his sovereign, was forced to protest against it as inadmissible in diplomatic intercourse. His remonstrances were unheeded, however; and when it came to the question of affairs in the Netherlands, England's communications and Austria's replies became even more pointed. A complete rupture was inevitable, but Kaunitz would not permit matters to proceed as far as that until he had seen his way clear to a union with France.

His one idea, since he had been in power, was the recovery of Silesia, and as a means to that end he endeavored to come to an agreement with France and turn it to his advantage. He was shrewd enough to keep this plan a secret, as well as that other which went hand in hand with it, the humiliation of Prussia. That Maria Theresa, who had never ceased to grieve over the loss of Silesia, fully sympathized with these schemes cannot be doubted. The only hope of their realization, however, lay in separating Prussia from all her allies; and an alliance with France would be a long step in this direction. England and France at that time were on the verge

of hostilities over the boundaries of Canada, and England had been endeavoring to involve France in a war with some of the European powers, so as to have a free hand in America. This, however, could not be accomplished without assistance; and, beside, there was Hanover to protect. The number of troops there had been increased, to be sure, but they were not sufficient to insure its safety. At this point England demanded to know how large a force Austria could raise in case France and Prussia should invade the Netherlands and Hanover.

Maria Theresa's eyes were opened now, and she replied that she could not spare any troops from Bohemia without exposing it to danger from Prussia. She would furnish the twenty-five thousand men agreed upon, in the Netherlands, leaving England to take Reuss in payment and seek assistance from the sovereign princes of Germany. These terms of Maria Theresa's were definite and final, but England further demanded that Austria should not only send thirty thousand men immediately to the Netherlands, but also an extra force to defend Hanover. This Maria Theresa refused to do, whereupon England threatened to break its

alliance with Austria unless it complied with these demands. Maria Theresa then declared plainly what she should demand of England in return for the protection of her territory against Prussia and Italy. Before her answer had been sent, still more peremptory demands arrived from England; but Kaunitz made no reply to them. Matters had gone too far to avoid a breach any longer. England broke off negotiations with Austria and went over at once to the King of Prussia.

Frederick II had learned through a traitor at Dresden that a secret alliance existed against him between Austria and Saxony, to which Russia was a party. He therefore gladly accepted the overtures of England, since his union with France had come to an end, with little prospect of its renewal. The treaty between Maria Theresa and France was signed on the first of May, 1756.

Thus there had been a remarkable change in the relations of the European powers when the storm-clouds gathered once more and broke in the Seven Years' War.

# *Chapter V*

## *Battles of the Seven Years' War*

TRUE to his practice of boldly meeting an impending danger, Frederick preferred to open hostilities himself, rather than leave it to his enemies. Why should he hesitate to kindle the flames of war in the land of so bitter an enemy as the Elector of Saxony (also King of Poland) had shown himself to be? Without any formal declaration having been made, therefore, he proceeded to invade Saxony with an army of sixty thousand men in three divisions. His advance, as usual, was rapid; all places of importance were seized, and on September 10, 1756, he entered Dresden. The Elector fled to the fortress of Königstein, which was considered impregnable, and at the foot of which the Saxon army of seventeen thousand men, all told, was in position.

The Queen alone remained in Dresden. She had the key to the secret archives, and when Frederick ordered them to be seized she placed herself

before the door of the room in which they were kept, declaring they should never be taken except by force. She was pushed aside, however, the chests were broken open, and Frederick found the documents, copies of which had been sent him by the traitor already mentioned, and which furnished proof of the secret alliance against him. With the exception of this violence, which, in truth, the august lady had brought upon herself, she was treated with the greatest respect. The poor country fared worse. Although pillage was strictly forbidden, Saxony had to bear all the oppression of a conquered country and meet levies of all kinds. Frederick emptied the arsenals, confiscated all the state revenues, and treated Saxony as if it were part of his own dominions ; but he spared the people wherever it was possible. Ignoring the protests of the Emperor and also of France, he pursued his own course, and worked for his own ends firmly and resolutely.

The position which the Saxon troops held at the foot of Königstein was unassailable. The only way to vanquish them was by starvation, so the King left them well surrounded and marched with his army into Bohemia to prevent any assistance reach-

ing the Saxons from that quarter. There were two Austrian armies in Bohemia — one under the command of Marshal Browne, at Kollin; the other under General Piccolomini at Olmütz, and later at Königgrätz. Browne was Saxony's nearest hope of rescue; but Frederick's sudden and unexpected appearance in Bohemia took him by surprise and found him unprepared for action. Several weeks elapsed, in fact, before he was ready to move, and Frederick made good use of the time. Moreover, the Minister of War, regarded as the most conservative of the Austrian field-marshals, wished to spare the army as much as possible, and to threaten Frederick for the advantage of Saxony without exposing it to long marches and changes of position.

Browne sent a force of eight thousand to Losowitz under Count Wied, while he himself left Kollin and took up a position near Budin. Wied's vanguard met the Prussians at Peterswalde, September tenth, and Browne was forced into an engagement. The battle was fought near Losowitz, October, 1756, but was not decisive, both generals claiming the victory. Meanwhile, the famished Saxons at Königstein were in terrible straits. They had made an ineffectual effort to escape, and a

second attempt was scarcely more successful, for their new position was no better than the one they had abandoned. The Prussians again surrounded them, and Browne, who had hurried forward hoping to rescue the beleaguered army, was compelled to retreat, leaving the unfortunate Saxons with no choice but to lay down their arms and surrender themselves with all their artillery to Frederick.

This blow crushed Saxony's hopes of further resistance, but the King of Prussia, more magnanimous than might have been expected considering his many reasons for irritation against that country, granted neutrality to Königstein and its occupants. The Elector wisely preferred, however, to retire to Warsaw, and Frederick, for reasons of his own, took good care that he should meet with no interference from Prussian troops on the way thither.

These events closed the campaign. Browne remained in Bohemia and the King went into Winter quarters in Saxony, leaving part of his troops in Silesia. Maria Theresa took the loss of Saxony very much to heart, for she was thereby deprived of a faithful ally. Her army had suffered little and accomplished less, but at least it had escaped great dangers and was safe, and this was some cause for

congratulation in Vienna; for, considering the unprepared condition in which the opening of the campaign had found Browne, the outcome might easily have been different and his troops have shared the fate of Saxony's.

At all events, Maria Theresa had received a fresh warning to be on her guard against such an adversary, who appeared with the swiftness of an arrow where he was least expected, and was rarely to be found when he was looked for. With her usual energy she urged on the preparation of the army, and bestowed upon the task all the care and devotion of a mother for her children. But, busied as she was with affairs at home, she was none the less mindful of the value of neighborly help in time of need, — an emergency always to be considered where Frederick the Great was concerned. As a fact, he himself had unconsciously done more for her than her best friend could have accomplished; for the summary methods he had resorted to in Saxony, in defiance of the customary rights of nations, was unprecedented and greatly incensed other rulers, especially the Elector, shut up in his fortress of Königstein like a bird in a cage, with no hope of escape save by the favor of Frederick and his as-

surance of safety from attack by Prussian troops, who, to put it mildly, would scarcely have treated him with courtly politeness.

Many of these sovereigns were, no doubt, thinking "What has befallen Saxony might also happen in our own lands any day"; and if it came to the actual question whether such a fate were merited or no, their consciences might not have altogether acquitted them. Be this as it may, there was a general feeling of resentment among them, and the tendency of popular report to magnify matters did its part toward helping Maria Theresa by intensifying the feeling against Frederick. Even the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation condemned his conduct and joined the ranks of his enemies. Frederick, however, understood the nondescript character of the Imperial army too well to be disturbed by this, and his able and active adversary was also sufficiently aware of it to urge on her own preparations the more actively. If the Imperial army had been her only dependence, there would have been little hope for her; but the French alliance had proved most satisfactory, and promised to be of the greatest service to her in the event of the dissolution of the German union. Indeed, its assurance of help was

now all the more certain because Frederick's actions were calculated to increase the hatred of France for him.

Sweden also allied itself to France, and Russia had promised to support Austria with an army of one hundred thousand men. With three additional armies, even though Sweden's strength did not count for much, and a total force of four hundred thousand, Maria Theresa's prospects looked very bright, and it was not to be wondered at that her eyes were fixed confidently and expectantly on her beloved Silesia. Prince Charles of Lorraine was put in command of the Austrian army, and under him was Marshal Browne, the former commander-in-chief in Bohemia. This completely altered the plan of campaign that Browne had laid out, and the rapid movements of the active enemy had to be met with the slow-moving and cumbersome army of the allies. After careful and judicious consideration, it was agreed that the best way of utilizing the coöperation of the allied armies was to close in on Frederick from every side, and thus destroy his forces and completely crush him. Was the King aware of this plan? It seems probable from the plans which he adopted. Prince Charles

and Browne occupied strong positions and calmly waited for the Prussian attack, while Daun was stationed some distance to the rear — a fact that caused Frederick some uneasiness.

The first battle of the campaign took place in the neighborhood of Prague on May 6, 1757. The Austrians seemed to have the advantage at first, for their artillery caused deadly havoc among the Prussians. The gallant Schwerin, seeing the danger, seized the colors of his regiment and rode at full speed against the enemy, urging his men on with shouts of encouragement. A shot found its way to his heart almost instantly, but his words still rang in every ear, his brave example was before every eye, and his death filled every heart with a thirst for revenge. The battle was fierce and bloody, and resulted in a victory for the Prussians; but it was not a decisive one, and Schwerin's fall was a serious blow to them. Frederick said when informed of his death, "He was worth ten thousand men to me!" The King was greatly depressed by this loss, and also by the fact that the greater part of Maria Theresa's army was safe within the walls of Prague, which looked like a speedy close to the campaign. Moreover, Daun's division was still

fresh, and free now to join the rest of the army, another advantage in their favor.

There was nothing left for Frederick but to lay siege to Prague; but as it promised to be a long and tedious affair for him, he ruthlessly bombarded the city and invoked the aid of two terrible allies — fire and famine. Every day increased the horrors of the situation in Prague. Prince Charles made every effort to encourage and cheer the soldiers and the citizens and persuade them to hold out by promises of speedy relief, but their own sufferings were more powerful arguments than any of his representations. The citizens lost heart, and the troops were continually committing acts of violence and becoming mutinous, so that Prince Charles was finally compelled to have a gallows erected in the public square to warn the marauders. Matters were desperate, when Daun approached with orders from Maria Theresa to relieve the distressed city at any cost.

The case was urgent, for the army and city might soon fall into Frederick's hands, a result he was confidently reckoning upon. Daun must be driven from the neighborhood in order to accomplish it, and how to do that without weakening his

besieging army was the problem that confronted him. With his usual skill, however, he solved it by hastening forward with a small detachment to join the Prince of Bevern's division, and with him advancing to meet Daun. The battle of Kollin was the result of their meeting. It was a desperate struggle, and a disastrous defeat for the hitherto victorious King of Prussia. Daun was the victor and Prague was saved.

Maria Theresa received the news with a jubilant heart, and hastened at once with the Emperor to inform the Countess Daun of her husband's victory in person. Nor was this enough. To celebrate the day she established the "Order of Maria Theresa," which was to be won only by deeds of bravery in battle, and which by the infrequency of its bestowal was held as the highest possible honor in the Austrian army. The first cross of the order glistened upon the breast of Daun. As a still further expression of her joy and exultation, the Empress had a jubilee medal coined in commemoration of her victory.

The results of the battle of Kollin were far reaching. The popular belief in Frederick's invincibility received a severe blow, and the courage of his

soldiers sank in proportion as that of the Austrians rose. Maria Theresa's forces were continually receiving additions, while the Prussian army began to dwindle. Matters looked somewhat brighter along the Rhine, but the Imperial army with a French auxiliary force was advancing to the rescue of Saxony, and Frederick was forced to march hurriedly into Thuringia to meet them, leaving his army in Saxony and Lusatia under competent generals.

Soubise, so famous for his agility in retreat, fell back at Frederick's approach, and Erfurt opened its gates to him. A few days later Seydlitz surprised the French at Gotha, and drove them away in what might be called headlong flight; for in the ducal palace Seydlitz found the dishes still smoking on the table as they had been left, and he and his officers sat down with a good appetite to enjoy the meal the hungry Frenchmen had been so easily frightened away from. This little exploit of the cavalry afforded unbounded delight to the King and his soldiers, and served as a prelude to what was to follow at Rossbach.

Nothing could equal the scorn with which the French in their overwhelming conceit regarded Prussia's little army; indeed, some of the officers

went so far as to question whether it were not derogatory to their honor to engage in serious conflict with such a paltry force. But when the battle really began they took to their heels in a manner that scarcely has its equal in history. Of the noble Imperial army it can only be said that the greater part of it left the field without firing a shot. It was a rabbit-hunt, not a battle of men, in which the Prussians played the parts of hunters and drivers at the same time, with Seydlitz for a leader. That doughty baron's only regret was that he had not been able to catch the gallant Soubise himself; but the swiftest horse could scarcely have done that!

To prove that even flight may lead to glory Prince Soubise, whom even the French themselves had nicknamed "Prince Sottise," [1] received a Field-Marshal's staff after this. The riddle is easily solved, however,—Pompadour![2] The French continued their flight as far as the Rhine, until they were sure Frederick had been left far behind.

The Austrians had been victorious since the battle of Kollin. Bevern's and Winterfeld's forces

1 "Prince Folly."

2 Madame Pompadour had great influence in the Court of Louis XV of France, and virtually dictated the policy of the government during this period.

had been defeated. Silesia was almost within their grasp, a result they hoped to see accomplished before the end of the campaign. But Frederick had other plans. The battle of Rossbach had restored Saxony to him, but matters had come to the point when he must regain his hold on Silesia or lose all the advantage he had won.

In twelve days he crossed the whole breadth of his dominions, and effected a union with Bevern's force in Silesia. This gave him about thirty-three thousand men, and with these troops, many of them exhausted by their long march, he faced an Austrian army of double their strength near the village of Leuthen. Here the Austrians met a crushing defeat; they lost twenty-six thousand five hundred men, killed or taken prisoners, one hundred and sixteen cannon, fifty-one standards, and four thousand commissary, baggage, and ammunition wagons, beside forfeiting the results of all their former victories. Whole regiments were annihilated or taken prisoners. The contemptuous designation of the Prussian army as the "Potsdam Night-watch Parade" was terribly avenged, and the precept was brought home to the Austrians, as it had been to the French at Rossbach, that "pride goeth before a fall"!

And Maria Theresa?

It was a bitter disappointment she was called upon to bear. She had looked upon Silesia as her own once more; she had seen her army triumph over the enemy; her heart had been full of joy and gratitude, — and now!

Nevertheless, in spite of these misfortunes, her brave spirit did not quail; her faith in the justice of her cause was unshaken. She redoubled her exertions to strengthen the army and make up the terrible losses it had suffered. But were there not quiet hours when with clasped hands she raised her tearful eyes to Heaven in prayer, as a relief to her oppressed heart? Being ~~but~~ a woman, and a devout and pious woman, it must have been so.

The third year of the war began in the early Spring: what terrible sacrifices it was to cost! What bloodshed and suffering, what distress and misery to thousands! Yet there was no thought of peace. Still must the sword reap its deadly harvest, like the scythe in the ripe grain-field, and Maria Theresa was powerless to prevent it. Her funds were low, their replenishment very difficult; and what vast sums were required to fill the gaps that Leuthen alone had caused! Bohemia was ex-

hausted, little dependence could be placed upon the other states for help, and the treasury was slow in filling. She saw nothing but difficulties ahead, and, worst of all, the people were disheartened. The feeling against Prince Charles of Lorraine became so strong that he was forced to resign; but for once the ministry of war, which usually bore the blame of all mistakes and disasters, escaped the unsparing censure that was universally expressed against the commander-in-chief. Count Daun was appointed in his place, and hastened to Vienna to consult upon plans for the new campaign.

A few preliminary skirmishes resulted in favor of the Austrians, but the first important event was the loss of Schweidnitz, their last hold in Silesia. The garrison, reduced by want and distress, were taken prisoners by Frederick, who then advanced against Olmütz. From thence to Vienna was but a step, and one that was seriously considered by many of the Prussians. But Maria Theresa had again put the right man in the right place — two men, indeed, who proved themselves worthy of her confidence, Daun and Laudon. Daun's great skill lay in his choice of positions, and he possessed a caution and deliberation that often put Frederick's patience to



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the test and defeated his plans. He made no move until he was satisfied as to the fitness of his army, which consisted largely of new troops; but when his preparations were complete he marched to the assistance of Olmütz, which Frederick had besieged. He cut off the supplies of the Prussians by attacking and destroying a heavy train of provisions and ammunition which Frederick was anxiously expecting and depending upon. This loss, together with a sudden attack by Daun, forced the Prussians to raise the siege and retreat. Olmütz was saved.

Maria Theresa was greatly relieved, for she realized the importance of Olmütz, and was correspondingly grateful to her commander-in-chief, whose services she had already had good cause to value. She built fresh hopes, too, on the invasion of Brandenburg by the Russians, which obliged Frederick to divide his forces to meet this new danger. Leaving part of his army to oppose Daun, he marched rapidly against the Russians, who were ravaging Prussia. He defeated them with great slaughter at Zorndorf, wreaked a terrible vengeance upon them, and then returned to Saxony, where he was much needed, for his brother Henry was there and was hard pressed by Daun and the Im-

perial army. Daun employed his usual tactics in making his own position secure, while his light cavalry continually harassed the King's troops, and in avoiding the decisive action into which Frederick was anxious to force him.

Frederick pitched his camp at Hochkirchen, on a plain directly opposite Daun, a position protested against by all his generals and of which Keith said, "If the Austrians leave us here in peace, they all ought to be hanged!" The King paid no attention, however, to this good advice. Daun's eagle glance was not one to overlook an opportunity that lay within his grasp, but his deliberation seemed to imply that he did not intend to accept the bold challenge, and Frederick had already decided to break up his camp, when Daun suddenly fell upon it in the early morning (October 14, 1758) while the Prussians were still asleep. A desperate struggle followed, at first in total darkness. Then the daylight struggling through a heavy mist, with flames from the burning village, lit up the scene of slaughter where the Austrians had the foe at their mercy. Had not Frederick's army maintained its discipline so well, but a small part of it would have escaped.

It was a brilliant victory for Daun, but he committed a grave error in not following it up, as his adversary would not have failed to do. Too late he realized the folly of allowing his irrepressible foe to escape, only to rally his forces and drive the Austrians from Silesia. Daun hoped to retrieve this blunder by achievements in Saxony. He had the advantage there and advanced to attack Dresden, but the Prussian General Schmettau set fire to the suburbs and showed signs of such vigorous resistance that, rather than see the city destroyed, Daun abandoned the attack and withdrew into Bohemia.

The results achieved by the allied armies in other quarters were not remarkable. Daun by his victory at Hochkirchen bore off the honors of this campaign, nor did he lack laurels in recognition of his services. He had a mistress who rewarded right royally.

Maria Theresa needed the Winter's rest to strengthen her position both at home and abroad. Some new alliances and a renewal of the old ones seemed to promise well for the future. Russia made fresh preparations on land and sea; an agreement was made with Sweden and Denmark by which they were to close the passage of the strait against the

English, and the Imperial army bestirred itself to repair damages.

Nor did Frederick neglect this opportunity to replenish his treasury, which was much in need of it, and to increase and improve his army.

# *Chapter VI*

## *Close of the Long Struggle*

THE campaign of 1759 began with inroads by the Prussians, who committed terrible ravages. Prince Henry of Prussia was ordered to destroy the warehouses and magazines in Bohemia as well as in Franconia, both of which were suffering from depredations he had made with the object of replenishing Prussia's war coffers.

Daun did not take the field until later. He cautiously waited for the appearance of the allies, and besides, it was important to effect the union of Laudon with the Russians. Although Frederick exerted himself to prevent this, Daun carried out his plans successfully, and confronted the King with an army of sixty thousand men. As the latter's total force amounted to only forty thousand, he retired, and the allies took up a strong position near Kunersdorf. There they were boldly attacked by the Prussians, and a battle ensued which at first seemed to promise

Frederick a brilliant victory; but Laudon changed the fortunes of the day and drove the Prussians from the field. When Frederick wrote to his minister, Von Finkenstein, that it was a misfortune he still lived, he expressed his desperate situation after the battle of Kunersdorf, for had the Russians followed up their advantage he must inevitably have been overwhelmed. A disagreement between Laudon and the Russian General Soltikoff was the cause of this failure, or, as was afterwards maintained and perhaps with some reason, the Russians' crafty policy did not include Frederick's complete destruction. Although Soltikoff, with an eye to possible changes in the Russian government and its attitude toward the King of Prussia, may have determined not to follow up the victory, still it is difficult to explain why Daun should have remained inactive when the enemy's complete defeat would have inevitably produced such important results for Austria. At last he moved to another position at Triebel, which commanded the Prussian situation; but Prince Henry contrived to annoy and harass his troops constantly without risking a decisive engagement.

One misfortune after another befell Frederick.

General Finck's corps of twelve thousand men were defeated and taken prisoners by Daun, a heavy blow to the King's pride as well as to his army; and a few days later fifteen thousand of Diereck's force shared the same fate. Such a succession of disasters seriously crippled Frederick's resources, and even the reënforcements brought him by the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick could do nothing to help matters.

Notwithstanding the severity of the weather, it was not until the beginning of January, 1760, that the armies went into Winter quarters. Frederick remained in Freiberg, and his troops camped in the villages about Dresden, some of them even in tents. It was bitterly cold and they could keep warm only by huddling together. Sickness broke out among them, and the mortality was great; but Daun did not fare much better. Both armies suffered terribly, and their losses were heavy.

The year had been a disastrous one for Frederick, and fortune had smiled on the Empress; but her goal, Silesia, was still far distant, although Frederick's lack of resources for the continuance of the war seemed to bring it a little nearer. Her affairs, indeed, were in better condition than the King's.

He was in great need of money to recruit his army, and obliged to resort to any expedient to obtain it. He could not afford to be particular about his methods, as poor Saxony discovered to its cost. The willingness of its subjects to make sacrifices for her made it easier for Maria Theresa to obtain the means that she also needed for the prosecution of the war. Frederick tried in various ways to bring about a peace, but the Empress would not yield now that her hopes seemed about to be realized. She resolutely determined to continue the struggle for the sake of Silesia, that precious jewel she hoped soon to place once more in her imperial crown.

The next campaign opened in Silesia, and propitiously for Maria Theresa; for, at Landshut, Laudon destroyed a whole Prussian army corps under General Fouquet, with the exception of a small detachment of cavalry which managed to cut its way through and escape. Fouquet was taken prisoner, and all his supplies and ammunition fell into the hands of the Austrians. Important as this achievement was in itself, its principal value to Maria Theresa lay in the effect produced by so signal a victory at the very beginning of the campaign. Her troops had fought with desperate fury and

showed no quarter, for they had been met with stubborn resistance and heroic valor on the part of the Prussians. There was great rejoicing when the news of the victory reached Vienna, and no one was happier than the Empress over the moral effect it produced.

Frederick, who was confronting Daun in Saxony, had determined to go to the assistance of Fouquet in Silesia, but Daun followed, or rather kept close beside him, while Lacy was in the rear, annoying and impeding him at every turn and doing much damage to his supply trains. Therefore he halted at Görlitz, and, changing his plan entirely, decided to attempt the reconquest of Dresden. He forced Lacy out of his way, evaded the Imperial army, and summoned Dresden to surrender. Failing in an attempt to surprise the city, he began to bombard it, although he lacked heavy artillery. When Daun discovered the King's move, he lost no time in turning back after him, and, reaching Dresden, dispersed the Prince of Holstein's force, and sent a considerable body of troops to the assistance of the garrison, in spite of all Frederick's efforts to prevent it. Thinking that Daun would not allow the city to be ruined, he continued the bombardment, and

wrought havoc within the walls. Great as its distress was, however, Dresden would not yield, and Frederick's troubles increased daily. Glatz was captured, his losses at Dresden were very heavy, and a large part of his necessary supplies fell into the hands of the Austrians.

Thus blow followed blow, and the loss of Glatz depressed Frederick in proportion as it rejoiced Maria Theresa, who thereby gained once more a foothold in Silesia. Nor was Laudon content with his easy conquest of Glatz. Encouraged by it, and knowing the insufficiency of the garrison at Breslau, he proceeded directly to that place, expecting as speedy a victory there as at Glatz; a natural error, perhaps, but a serious one, as he soon discovered. The commander at Breslau was Tauentzien, a man not easy to subdue. Although Laudon brought all his force to bear against the city, he made no progress toward its capture; and when Prince Henry came to its relief, he was forced to raise the siege.

Frederick meantime had abandoned his fruitless bombardment of Dresden and hastened to Silesia, where his presence was needed; but Daun must have been accurately informed as to his movements,

for he followed closely and passed him, Lacy falling to the rear of the Prussians. Thus there was the strange spectacle of what seemed like one huge army marching toward Silesia in three divisions, while Laudon approached with his troops from Breslau to meet them, and the Russians also advanced to join the allies. The Austrian officer seemed quite justified in his remark when he said, "The bag is open and ready to catch the Prussians; we have only to pull the string!"

When this was repeated to Frederick his eyes flashed, and he said with a bitter laugh, "The man has spoken truly; but I will make a hole in the bag that they will not find it easy to mend!"

Vienna waited anxiously for the next news. Such a thing as Frederick's escape seemed scarcely possible. But almost every night he changed his position, which kept Daun in uncertainty as to his whereabouts, and it was this ceaseless activity and the wonderful mobility of his troops which proved "the hole in the bag" that was to show him the way out.

From the positions occupied by the encircling armies of the enemy, he perceived it was Daun's plan to annihilate him by a combined attack. The

decisive moment arrived on the fourteenth of August, 1760. Daun was absolutely certain of success; and indeed who would not have been, with the Prussians completely surrounded as they were? During the night, however, Frederick abandoned his position and moved to Parchwitz. Surprised and chagrined, Daun found that his plans were frustrated, and that, while the Prussians had not yet escaped from "the bag," he had not altogether succeeded in "pulling the string." Nor was Laudon any the less astonished, when he approached Liegnitz with thirty thousand men, to find the Prussians drawn up in order of battle. He hastened to form his own lines, but had only partially succeeded when the enemy attacked him. Taken completely by surprise, Laudon had the added disadvantage of a most unfavorable position, which greatly impeded the movements of his troops. Though they fought bravely, returning again and again to the charge, he was finally forced to retreat with heavy loss.

Everything seemed to have conspired against the Austrian generals. Daun might have sent assistance to Laudon had he known of the battle; but a strong wind prevented any sound of the heavy fir-

ing from reaching him, so he suspected nothing. If Laudon had sent him word, the result might have been different — indeed must have been; but even when he received news of it Daun made no move, thinking the locality where the attack would have to be made was too unfavorable to offer any hope of success.

Laudon was depressed by this defeat; but he was not held responsible for it even by the Empress, who, while she regretted a misfortune that was also her own, sent him assurances of her sympathy and continued favor. To be able thus to "pour wine and oil on his wounds" and keep up her own courage as well, instead of giving way to depression, was still another proof of the strength and wisdom that never failed her.

Frederick was well aware that his victory had brought him only temporary relief. He had made the "hole in the bag," to be sure, but to get out of it was another matter. Daun understood this also, but none the less his failure to assist Laudon was a grave error. His plans were well laid, for the position of the Austrian and Russian forces not only made it very difficult for the Prussians to obtain their supplies, but must in time cut them off alto-

gether. The resources of Breslau had been so exhausted by the siege that Frederick's only way out of his predicament was the doubtful possibility of a victory over Daun's army. The withdrawal of the Russians, however, opened the way for him to Bohemia, but in Saxony his outlook was unfavorable. The "hole in the bag" had helped him only for the time being, and Daun meanwhile was planning to strike a blow at his heart by seizing Berlin. Should the Russians be able to accomplish this, he was to fall back, while an Austrian auxiliary force under Lacy advanced to their support.

This plan was carried out, and on the third of October the Russian vanguard suddenly appeared before Berlin. The danger was imminent, and, while the city hastily prepared for defence, Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, who had been opposing the Swedes, hurried a part of his army to the capital by forced marches. Help was also summoned from Saxony, but the odds (sixteen thousand against thirty-five thousand) were too great, and Berlin was forced to capitulate. It was well for the city that General Tottleben showed both clemency and forbearance, and spared the treasures of art and learning accumulated there; but Lacy's Austrian and

Saxon troops were not so considerate, and Frederick's palaces were overrun and despoiled by them.

It was only a few days, however, before the news that Frederick himself was approaching to the rescue of his capital drove the enemy from the walls of Berlin. Matters had not been progressing favorably for the King. His prospects were still dark, and if they were to assume a brighter aspect he would be obliged to attack Daun, whose position at Torgau was so strong as to make it a very difficult undertaking. The Austrian troops were fresh, moreover, and well equipped; but, notwithstanding all this and the advantage of numbers, — Daun had sixty thousand men, while he had but forty thousand himself, — Frederick decided to make the attempt, desperate as it seemed.

The struggle was long and deadly; the constant discharge of artillery shook the earth and whole ranks were mown down, even the King himself being wounded. Daun received a bullet in the thigh, but he was so confident of victory that he despatched a messenger to Vienna with the news — too soon, however, for the day was not yet ended! Just as night was closing in, Zieten, who had previously taken no part in the action, scaled the

heights of Süplitz and captured the hill. This decided the fate of the Austrians. Notwithstanding all their efforts, they were compelled to give way and retreat to Dresden, — a bitter blow to Daun, who had already announced his victory in Vienna! The battle was one of the bloodiest of the war; sixteen thousand Austrians lay dead on the field or were taken prisoners. But the Prussians had paid dearly for their victory, having lost fourteen thousand men. Maria Theresa, however, showed her usual tact and magnanimity toward the defeated general, by going out of her way to meet him on his return from Torgau, and seeing that his wound received proper attention.

Frederick had not succeeded, however, in wresting the Plauen valley, the key to Dresden, from the Austrians. They went into Winter quarters there, while Laudon, after an unsuccessful attempt to capture Kosel, retired to Glatz. The Russians withdrew to Poland and the Swedes to Pomerania. The French had accomplished little and had met with many reverses, but toward the end of the campaign they obtained a victory over the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick. The struggle was continued in Hesse without any decisive results, until

the coming of Winter made it necessary to suspend hostilities. Thus ended the fifth year of the war, with its harvest of death and destruction, leaving all the armies completely exhausted. And still no sign of peace!

Notwithstanding his victories, Frederick had suffered heavily, and the future looked dark for him; while Maria Theresa could look forward, if not confidently, at least with less doubt and anxiety. She continued her preparations most indefatigably. Laudon was placed in command in Silesia, while Saxony was assigned to Daun as his field of action, the object of their united endeavors being the reconquest of Silesia. Frederick was aware of this, and shaped his plans accordingly, although circumstances compelled him to act strictly on the defensive. He occupied the famous camp at Bunselwiltz, where he was in a good position to protect Schweidnitz. Laudon was anxious to attack him there, but the Russian General Butterlin refused to be drawn into a decisive engagement; at most he would only consent to assist Laudon with an auxiliary force. Frederick had no fear of an attack by day, but was obliged to guard against the danger of being surprised at night. September of 1761 came, and still

nothing had occurred. On the thirtieth of that month, however, Laudon made a sudden attack on Schweidnitz, from all sides at once, and the commander there, who had neglected all precautions, taken completely by surprise, was forced to surrender unconditionally.

Frederick's star seemed to be setting; for in Pomerania too he had been unfortunate. The usual vacillating and dilatory methods of the War Office favored him somewhat, for Laudon had received orders not to undertake any further operations and to confine himself to the defensive. The fall of Kolberg, which had made a stout resistance, and only capitulated when all the supplies had given out, was a fresh blow to the King. The Prussians had met with no decisive results in their encounters with the French, nor had they succeeded in inflicting any damage upon them. The end of the campaign left Frederick apparently on the verge of ruin. Maria Theresa's heart was full of joy and hope, for never had Silesia been so nearly within her grasp as now, when her enemy had apparently exhausted his last resources.

The beginning of the year 1762 seemed to give her fresh grounds for hope, but these were sud-

denly dissipated by the news of the death of the Czarina Elizabeth of Russia.[1] She had been Frederick's bitterest enemy, and her successor, Peter III, was his most enthusiastic admirer. The new Czar gave immediate proof of his friendship by issuing a manifesto in which he formally announced his intention of making peace with Prussia. A treaty was signed May 5, 1762, which restored to Frederick all conquests made by the Russians, and paved the way for an alliance between the two countries. This completely altered the aspect of affairs, and dashed Maria Theresa's hopes and plans to the ground; for Frederick was now in a position to concentrate all his forces against Austria. Sweden too had withdrawn from its alliance with Austria, and followed the example of Russia in making terms of peace with Prussia. Everything seemed conspiring against the Empress.

Silesia still remained the centre of the struggle, and Frederick assumed the command there in person, the recapture of Schweidnitz being his first object. Choosing a favorable position, he awaited the arrival of the Russian troops promised him by

[1] The Czarina died Jan. 5, 1762.

his new ally, Peter III, before attempting any important move against his old adversary, Daun. Just as all his preparations were complete, however, and he was about to begin the attack, news arrived which threatened to upset all his plans. The Czar, Peter III, had been dethroned. Catherine II immediately succeeded him, and her first act was the recall of the troops which had been sent to assist the Prussians. This was a misfortune which Frederick had not anticipated, but he tried to avert its immediate disastrous results by persuading the Russian general to defer his departure for three days. This made prompt action necessary, but Frederick was the man of all others to meet emergencies. Although the Russians took no part in the action, Daun was quite in the dark as to their attitude, and this uncertainty obliged him to weaken his force by detaching a body of troops to watch them. Frederick's attack was successful. Daun's army was defeated and driven from the heights of Burkersdorf.

The King's greatest anxiety now concerned Catherine's attitude toward European affairs; consequently her declaration of neutrality was a great relief to his mind, for he feared that Russia's power

might be again exerted on the side of Austria. After his victory at Burkersdorf, he lost no time in laying siege to Schweidnitz. Daun tried to relieve brave old Count Guasco, who was in command there, but met with such a serious defeat at Reichenbach that he was obliged to leave the stronghold to the fate which finally overtook it.

The King next turned his attention to Saxony, where his brother Henry was bravely resisting the Austrians and the Imperial army. The Austrians had not been meeting with great success, but the arrival of Count Haddick as commander-in-chief seemed to turn the fortune of war again in their favor. Had Haddick not waited for reënforcements from Daun, Prince Henry would probably have been defeated; but by the time they arrived the Prussian army had also been strengthened by troops from Silesia, and in the battle of Freiberg, which immediately ensued, the Austrians were defeated with heavy loss.

It was the last battle of this dreadful war, which for so many long years had wrought untold misery throughout the wretched countries that had been the scene of the bloody conflict. Frederick, to be sure, continued the struggle against the Imperial army

until the panic caused by Kleist's huzzars forced the small German States to beg for peace. In Westphalia, and Hesse, also, the Prussians at last laid down their victorious arms. In truth, the exhaustion of all parties made peace imperative. It was finally declared February 15, 1763, and a treaty was signed at Hubertsburg which restored all conquests and left everything practically where it was at the beginning of the Seven Years' War, Prussia retaining undisturbed possession of Silesia.

This was the heaviest sacrifice that Maria Theresa could have been called upon to make for peace. It cost her a great struggle with herself, and many bitter tears, but she did it so that the blessings of peace might be restored to her people.

# *Chapter VII*

## *The Last Days of Maria Theresa*

PEACE! The joyful cry rang from one end of Maria Theresa's dominions to the other, and was echoed in her own heart; for, deeply as she grieved over Silesia, now lost to her forever, she must have had a feeling of thankfulness when she thought of those battlefields which had been reddened with the blood of so many thousands of her people. Her deeply religious nature must have prompted the thought: "Since all my sacrifices, all my efforts and exertions have availed nothing toward the restoration of Silesia to me, it must be the will of Him who rules all, and without whose notice not a sparrow falls."

The great Empress, who could control herself so well, could not fail to recognize how incomplete her efforts toward governing and improving the condition of her people had been thus far, and to welcome a peace which would enable her to continue

the work, and, in devoting all her energies to remove the devastation caused by the war, find a balm for the wound in her own heart which the loss of Silesia had inflicted.

It would be doing Maria Theresa a great injustice, however, to imply that she to whom the condition of the government and its evils had been so clear, even during her father's lifetime, had not profited by the occasional intervals of peace which the country had enjoyed, and worked zealously for their reform until war again turned the ploughshare into the sword. It was impossible for her to recognize defects without endeavoring to remedy them. We have already seen how resolutely she checked the luxury and extravagance of the Court after her father's death; how, taught by bitter experience the need of reformation in the army, she had strengthened and prepared it for the long and desperate struggle that was to come; how she had increased the country's revenues and readjusted the system of taxation upon which she depended for means to defend her right to the throne; and with what unerring judgment she had chosen the best men to carry out her plans, and placed them where their abilities would be of most service to the country.

Her character and talents especially fitted her for the position she occupied as sovereign of a great Empire in need of reorganization, for to her clear insight, her habit of going to the root of things, and her wide sympathies, was added a calmness and strength of purpose which enabled her to achieve great results without rashness or precipitancy. Her reforms indeed were brought about so gradually, and newer and more effective methods succeeded the old so naturally, that they aroused no opposition, and were accomplished with none of that confusion which more abrupt and violent changes might have caused. She took great pleasure in watching the fruitful results of these efforts, without any desire for that personal glory which is often so cheaply obtained. There was, in truth, no department of public affairs which was not in need of reconstruction, no part of the national life where she did not find something to rectify; but nothing escaped her, even to the smallest detail. Everywhere, from the army down to her own domestic service, the results of her conscientious care and judicious supervision were visible.

In all matters of learning and education Maria Theresa depended on the help of Van Swieten, an

eminent and accomplished Dutch physician. She had appointed him to a position in Court, but soon recognized his profound knowledge in all branches of learning, and at once assigned him to a field where his talents could be utilized, not only in the sanitary administration of her realm, but also in other departments in which his services were quite as valuable.

Under the personal supervision of the Empress, Van Swieten undertook the reconstruction of the whole system of education and the reorganization of the Imperial library. Many schools and institutions were established, including one for the study of Oriental languages, rendered necessary by the increasing importance of Austria's relations with the East, one for veterinary surgery, and an academy for young noblemen. Though deeply and sincerely devout, Maria Theresa realized that the ecclesiastical power and authority required restriction, and that the condition of the monasteries was sadly in need of reform. Much as she accomplished for higher culture, the education of the lower classes was no less important to her; for Austria had not kept pace with general progress in this direction, and dense ignorance prevailed among them. Her chief ad-

viser and supporter in this work was Joseph von Sonnenfels, whose suggestion, "It is not enough to have public schools in the large cities; not even the smallest village should be without one," was warmly approved by Maria Theresa, the mother of her country. The Normal School in Vienna set an example for other cities, which was soon followed in the so-called "low country."

If the abolishment of the rack, with its inhuman and unchristian tortures, had been Maria Theresa's only contribution to higher civilization in her Empire, she would have deserved the thanks, not only of her own people but of all mankind; but while this was her most notable act, there was no department of life, no branch of the government, that did not bear witness to her noble qualities of head and heart or feel the influence of her beneficent power. She loved and fostered music, and among the masters who shed a lustre over that period the great names of Gluck, Haydn, and Mozart will testify to her unfailing interest in this art; while the branches of painting and sculpture claimed no less a share of her patronage and support.

It is useless to attempt here to go into all the details of her various achievements, but one subject

must be mentioned which deeply involved the welfare of the people and of the country, — that of agriculture, trade, and commerce. Her efforts to improve agricultural conditions were necessarily rudimental, and results were left for the future to develop; but it was Maria Theresa's sowing that made the harvest of later times possible, and she prepared the way by founding schools for the study of agriculture, thus providing opportunities for the farmers to secure larger knowledge of their avocation. Another great step was the realization of the need of a system of drainage, now so indispensable to human welfare, but which at that time had received little attention, especially in Austria. She instituted a thorough study of the subject, had large areas of land drained and made productive, thus providing more farms for the people. She also built new villages in the sparsely populated districts of Hungary, Galicia, Bohemia, and Banat,[1] and settled them with industrious workmen; founded the Economical Society of Lower Austria, and instituted annual prize examinations. She imported merino sheep

[1] Banat is a part of Southern Hungary between the Maros on the north, the Theiss on the west, and the Danube on the south. It was part of the "Military Frontier" which Maria Theresa established.

from Spain, and had them distributed among sheep-raisers. In Hungary and Bohemia, where there were large flax fields, apiaries were started. Fine breeds of horses were raised for use by the cavalry. In these and other ways the resources of the country were developed for its own enrichment, instead of going out of the country for the advantage of foreign treasuries. Trade and commerce were facilitated by the building of new roads and canals. Rivers were made more navigable; new markets were opened up and seaports were improved and increased, while home industries and manufactures were encouraged by the erection of factories.

In short, the field over which her watchful supervision extended was boundless, and yet every detail received her personal attention. All reports were made to her directly, and she discussed matters of all kinds with those who were experts, often surprising them by her accurate knowledge and apt suggestions. And yet with all these cares the Empress still found time to perform the various duties of government with unabated zeal and energy, and devoted herself to her family, the care of which was a sacred mission to her, with the utmost fidelity.

As we take a glance into this august family circle

it is difficult to believe it that of an Emperor and Empress, such an atmosphere of simplicity and sincere affection prevailed there. Maria Theresa presided over it with all the womanly charm and devotion of a true German housewife and mother. A handsomer royal couple could scarcely have been found. Their married life had been very happy, for they were one in heart and mind. She was devoted to her husband and he to her, although her father had not favored the attachment. The Emperor Francis II was calm and deliberate; Maria Theresa high-spirited and quick-tempered, but firm and decided, and full of life and vivacity. Their natures therefore complemented each other, the Emperor's placidity and easy-going disposition often acting as a beneficial restraint. When a disagreement occurred between them, — something that will happen in the happiest married life, — the Empress would burst out impetuously, while her consort only grumbled in his beard; but the chief lady-in-waiting, Countess Fuchs, who shared the confidence of both, usually succeeded in soon restoring peace, for their misunderstandings never lasted long.

The Emperor rarely concerned himself with

matters that did not appeal to his own tastes and inclinations, and took no part in affairs of state except at the request of his wife. At such times he gave his advice gladly and cheerfully, for no one could resist the covert flattery of Maria Theresa's entreaties. Their marriage was blessed with sixteen children, living bonds which united and made the happiness of their lives, and whose love and affection were a refuge to the Empress from the cares of state. How often must her weary brain and overburdened soul have found rest and comfort in the embraces of her children, especially the younger ones, always nearest to a mother's heart, while she drew fresh strength and courage from their pure and innocent affection! The difference in the natures of the imperial pair was of advantage also in the training of their children, for the father's unfailing patience and good nature often acted as a check on the mother's hasty and imperious temper. At the same time there was no friction, for they were of one mind as to the importance of implanting the right principles; the Emperor insisting on strict obedience, propriety of behavior, and order (which was especially dear to him), while their moral and religious training fell to the share of the Empress, who never appeared love-

lier or more interesting than in the privacy of her family life.

The education of their numerous children was the most sacred duty and interest of both parents, and their teachers were selected with the greatest care. The Empress devoted especial attention to the education of her oldest son and successor, Joseph, particularly in the various languages spoken in her dominions. She knew from her own experience how strong is the bond between a sovereign and his people when he can speak with them in their mother-tongue. As a mark of her gratitude toward Hungary, she gave her dear "Seppel" (her familiar name for the Archduke Joseph), as steward of his household, the brave Hungarian Prince Bathiany, a man well fitted for the position and much esteemed and beloved by his own countrymen. No detail was neglected in the care bestowed on the management of the royal children, and the Empress' strict orders that they should "always be courteous to servants and inferiors" might well serve as an example to all mothers. This simple and beautiful family life, which had been Maria Theresa's chief joy and happiness, was sadly shattered by the death of the husband to

whom she was so tenderly attached. It cast a deep shadow over the rest of her life, and from the day of his death she never laid aside her mourning.

How richly Maria Theresa rewarded faithful service, aside from the honors or orders she conferred, is shown by the friendly relations between herself and the men she most valued and esteemed. She called old Count Palffy her "father"; the brave and loyal Khevenhüller, her "knight"; gallant Traun, her "shield"; and so on. Of the honored Count Chotek she once wrote: "I have had news from him every day, and was anxious for two days lest the worst might happen. When he is able to be out of bed, I shall visit him." Again, when Count Chotek had begged from the Empress the services of the Court physician, Dr. Kessler, for his sick child, she wrote back at once:

"Thank God that he is to be in such good hands as Kessler's. It can be easily arranged, and the letter will be sent to Van Swieten as a matter of form. I could not sleep last night for thinking of the charming child, and Van Swieten was much affected when he learned from me of his condition, but cheered up at once when he found that Kessler had charge of him. I hope he will not be marked

*"BE comforted, my good woman, for I have come to see you"*

as his brother Humelauer was,[1] and that Kessler will let me know every day how he is, for I am deeply interested."

Once when she was at Laxenburg[2] it chanced that a poor woman, one hundred and eight years of age, who was well known to her, and had not missed for many years the usual ceremony of the foot-washing on Maundy Thursday, was unable that year to be present, and bitterly lamented that she was not to see her beloved Empress. Maria Theresa heard of this, and was so touched by it that she went herself to the dame's miserable dwelling.

"You were grieving," she said, with her winning smile, "because you could not see me? Well, be comforted then, my good woman, for I have come to see you," and seating herself by the sick-bed she talked for some time with the delighted old woman in her kindly and sympathetic way, leaving when she departed a sum of money for her care and support. Nor did she ever afterward lose sight of her.

An event which happened at the time of the birth of one of her grandsons is deeply graven on the

[1] Smallpox was epidemic at this time in Vienna.

[2] Laxenburg is a village about nine miles from Vienna, where there was a castle and royal park.

hearts of the Austrians. She was at the theatre on the evening of February 19, 1768, when a message was brought to her announcing the birth of a son to her daughter-in-law, the wife of her son Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany. Overjoyed with the news, she quickly rose, and leaning far over the railing of her box she waved the paper and announced to the audience, "Leopold has a boy!" It may be imagined what applause followed these words, so clearly illustrating the familiar relations existing between her and her people.

But Maria Theresa's declining years unfortunately were destined to be no less stormy than the rest of her life had been. The death of her husband, coming so suddenly and unexpectedly, was a crushing blow, but in so far as she felt the need of a man's help she depended on her son Joseph. She made him co-regent with her, not because his youthful strength and energy were necessary to her, but because circumstances made it desirable. Many political complications had arisen — notably the partition of Poland, against which Maria Theresa, with her strong sense of right and justice, protested vigorously. The mere mention of it sufficed to arouse her furious indignation. Although the

Poles had brought it upon themselves, and perhaps deserved no better fate, she felt sure that only evil could result from such a step, as a declaration she made over her own signature when the affair was concluded shows. It ran thus: "I agree to it since such a number of wise men have so decreed, but long after I am dead time will show the bitter consequences!" The whole affair caused her "great sorrow," as she herself expressed it, and made her feel "more anxious than anything has ever done; indeed I am ashamed to have witnessed it!"

The Emperor Joseph's political views were decidedly opposed to those of his great mother, and necessarily so, perhaps, owing to the changes in conditions and circumstances. This was especially the case in the matter of the Bavarian succession, which cast a shadow over the Empress' later years. On the death of the Elector of Bavaria without issue, Joseph laid claim to his dominions; but Maria Theresa recognized the weakness of these claims, although at the same time she strongly resented Frederick II's interference and opposition to her son's plans. She shrank from the prospect of another war, but the situation became so involved and threatening that a conflict seemed inevitable. Preparations for war

were actually begun, when the Peace of Teschen[1] put an end to the danger, much to Maria Theresa's relief as well as satisfaction, for she had practically been the means of bringing it about.

Her great influence and popularity remained undiminished to the last; nor did age destroy the charm of her personality, although increasing stoutness caused her much annoyance and trouble. Her mind and heart retained all their youthful vigor, however, nor did she ever lose her kindly interest and sympathy for those about her.

On the eighteenth of November, 1780, a singular accident occurred to the Empress. Her grief for her dead husband was deep and sincere, and she faithfully observed every anniversary of his death, often going to his tomb in the imperial vault. As she walked with great difficulty, however, and the climbing of stairs was especially unpleasant to her, she had had a sort of seat contrived in which she could be raised or lowered easily and slowly into the vault. Upon her visit to the tomb on this occasion she had almost reached the floor of the vault when the

[1] Teschen is a manufacturing town in Austrian Silesia. The treaty concluded there May 13, 1779, between Austria and Prussia, terminated the War of the Bavarian Succession, and is known as "The Peace of Teschen."

strong rope which lowered her broke. She was not injured except from the shock, but this affected her all the more, for she regarded the incident as an omen that she too would soon be consigned to that silent place of rest.

Indeed, on the very next day, possibly as the result of a chill contracted in the tomb, she was seized with convulsive attacks of coughing, which she at first considered of little consequence; but the spasms grew so much worse that suffocation was feared. Bleeding brought little relief, and pleurisy soon developed, increasing her distress so that she was forced to sit up in an arm-chair. She bore her sufferings patiently and uncomplainingly, however. Only once, after a severe paroxysm of coughing and struggle for breath, she said, "God grant the end may come soon, for I do not know how I can bear it any longer," and to the Archduke Maximilian she remarked, "Thus far my courage and firmness have not deserted me; pray God, upon Whom all my thoughts are fixed, that I may keep them to the last!"

The malady increased, and a premonition of approaching death seized her. She called for the last sacrament, like a good Catholic, and then summoned

to her bedside all the members of her family who were in Vienna.

"Dear children," she said, "I have received the holy sacrament and know there is no hope of recovery for me. Remember what care and pains your father, the late Emperor, and I have bestowed upon your education; how we have always loved you and tried to do everything for you that could add to your happiness. All that I have in the world belongs to you," turning to the Emperor Joseph, "so I need make no disposition of anything. Only my children belong to me, and always will. I commit them to your care. Be a father to them! I shall die content if I have your promise to watch over them truly and faithfully."

To the other children she said, "Henceforth you must look upon the Emperor as your sovereign; obey and honor him as such. Be guided by his counsel; trust and love him with all your hearts, that he may have cause to bestow on you his care, his friendship, and his affection."

Then she quietly and calmly bestowed a maternal blessing upon each of her children, absent as well as present. Deeply moved, they gave way to their grief in sobs and tears, which affected Maria Theresa

most painfully, but she controlled herself and said to them firmly:

"I think it would be better for you to go into the next room and compose yourselves."

Even at that solemn moment she was still busy with affairs of government, and she signed several state documents with her own hand. She thanked her faithful Kaunitz for his loyal service to her, and also charged the Hungarian chancellor, Esterhazy, to convey her thanks to his people for all their loyalty, devotion, and help in time of need, at the same time bidding the Emperor Joseph ever to bear this in mind.

Joseph never left her side. She suffered greatly from distress for breath, and at eight o'clock cried out: "Open the window!" at the same time rising from her chair. The Emperor supported her gently in his arms, and asked, "Where does Your Majesty wish to go?"

Looking upward, she cried, "To thee! I come!" and with these last words sank back and expired.

Her death occurred November 29, 1780, in the sixty-fourth year of her age. Four days afterward she was laid by the side of her husband in the imperial vault of the Capuchins in Vienna. Her death

plunged the whole country into mourning. Few have departed from life so beloved and so honored.

Frederick the Great wrote of her: "The death of the Empress has grieved me much; she honored her throne and her sex. I have made war upon her, but I have never been her enemy!"

# Appendix

The following is a chronological statement of the more important events in the reign of Maria Theresa:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1717 | Birth of Maria Theresa. |
| 1731 | Acceptance of the Pragmatic Sanction. |
| 1733 | War with France on behalf of King of Poland. |
| 1736 | Marriage of Maria Theresa to Francis of Lorraine. |
| 1739 | Peace with Turkey. |
| 1740 | Death of Emperor Charles VI. |
| 1740 | Succession of Maria Theresa. |
| 1745 | Francis I elected Emperor. |
| 1741–45 | War of the Austrian Succession. |
| 1745 | Peace concluded at Dresden. |
| 1745–48 | War with France. |
| 1748 | Peace concluded at Aix-la-Chapelle. |
| 1757–63 | Seven Years' War. |
| 1763 | Peace concluded at Hubertsburg. |
| 1765 | Death of Emperor Francis I. |
| 1765 | Succession of Joseph II. |
| 1772 | Partition of Poland. |
| 1778–79 | War of the Bavarian Succession concluded, without bloodshed, by Peace of Teschen. |
| 1780 | Death of Maria Theresa. |

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